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General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

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Third Committee

Summary record of the second meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 27 September 2001, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Al Hinai (Oman)

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01-55388 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of the victims of the recent terrorist attacks

1. **The Chairman** paid tribute to the memory of the victims of the tragic events of 11 September 2001.

2. *At the invitation of the Chairman, the members of the Committee observed a minute of silence.*

Election of officers

3. **The Chairman** said that the Group of African States, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and the Group of Western European and Other States had nominated Mr. Oda (Egypt), Mr. García González (El Salvador) and Ms. Mårtensson (Sweden), respectively, as Vice-Chairpersons.

4. *Mr. Oda (Egypt), Mr. García González (El Salvador) and Ms. Mårtensson (Sweden) were elected Vice-Chairpersons by acclamation.*

5. **The Chairman** said that the Group of Eastern European States had nominated Mr. Priputen (Slovak Republic) for the office of Rapporteur.

6. *Mr. Priputen (Slovak Republic) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.*

Organization of work (A/56/250; A/C.3/56/L.1 and Add.1)

7. **The Chairman** drew attention to chapter II of the report of the General Committee (A/56/250), which set forth guidelines with regard to the conduct of work, and specifically to section L thereof, which reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate Main Committee entrusted with responsibility for administrative and budgetary matters. The letter from the President of the General Assembly concerning the allocation of items to the Third Committee had been issued as document A/C.3/56/1; in that connection, he recalled that the General Assembly had decided to allocate item 27 to the Third Committee and had recommended that the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women be referred to the Second Committee, for consideration under item 99.

8. With regard to the status of documentation, he drew attention to General Assembly resolution 50/206 C and subsequent resolutions concerning th control and limitation of documentation.

The meeting was suspended at 10.25 a.m. and resumed at 10.35 a.m.

9. **The Chairman** said he took it that th Committee wished to adopt the draft programme work contained in document A/C.3/56/L.1.

10. *It was so decided.*

11. **The Chairman** said he took it that th Committee agreed to a time limit of seven minutes f statements by individual delegations and 15 minut for statements by spokesmen of groups of delegation on the understanding that the time limit would als apply to the Secretariat.

12. *It was so decided.*

13. **Mr. Amorós Nuñez** (Cuba) expressed the hop that there would be some flexibility with regard to th time limit for statements by delegations.

14. **The Chairman** said he took it that th Committee wished to invite the Special Rapporteu and Special Representatives to present their reports t the Committee during the current session.

15. *It was so decided.*

16. **The Chairman**, recalling that the Genera Assembly had decided to waive the quorum requirement for opening a meeting, said that meeting would begin punctually.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.

United Nations A/C.3/56/SR.3

General Assembly

Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
17 October 2001

Original: English

Third Committee

Summary record of the 3rd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 8 October 2001, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Al-Hinai ..... (Oman)

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Agenda item 27: Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly*

Agenda item 108: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family*

Agenda item 109: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing*

Organization of work

* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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01-56854 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 27: Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (A/56/140)

Agenda item 108: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (A/56/3, A/56/57-E/2001/5, A/56/73-E/2001/68 and Add.1, A/56/114-E/2001/93 and Add.1, A/56/169, A/56/180, A/56/288-E/2001/104; A/C.3/56/L.2 and L.3)

Agenda item 109: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing (A/56/152)

1. **Mr. Langmore** (Director, Division for Social Policy and Development) said that the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon had reinforced the importance that all countries concerned about terrorism should deal not just with its symptoms but also with its roots: the poverty and powerlessness that bred frustration and despair.

2. Publication of the **Report on the World Social Situation 2001** (E/2001/70) was therefore timely. It covered a wide range of issues and highlighted various contemporary social pathologies, with equity as its cross-cutting theme, because, in many countries, high inequality was a significant impediment to economic growth and the alleviation of poverty. The report represented a major analytical effort by the Division and was currently produced every four years. Yet, particularly since the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, there had been a striking growth in global attention to social issues and he asked whether shorter thematic reports should be published with greater frequency, for example, every two years.

3. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (A/56/140), he said that the special session convened in Geneva to conduct a five-year review of the implementation of the commitments made at the World Summit had renewed and strengthened commitment to eradicating poverty, promoting full and productive employment and fostering social integration. The outcome document entitled "Further initiatives for social development" annexed to General Assembly resolution S-24/2 set out a framework for concerted action to promote just and equitable social development in the context of globalization and other challenges.

4. While the Millennium Summit, held only a few months after the special session, had overshadowed it to some extent in terms of global political impact, the follow-up to the World Summit remained extremely important, not least as a central element in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The report of the Secretary-General provided an overview of the measures undertaken since July 2000.

5. Another report of the Secretary-General dealt with cooperatives in social development (A/56/73-E/2001/68). It contained the views of Governments on the draft United Nations guidelines aimed at creating a supportive environment for the development of cooperatives. Overall, Governments had responded positively to the draft guidelines, although they had made certain suggestions based on which revised guidelines had been prepared and were annexed to the report. Governments had also reported their continued support for the development of cooperatives.

6. The Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (A/56/180) emphasized that globalization and youth empowerment were priority issues, while reviewing national, regional and global efforts towards implementation of the programme. As in the case of all the reports submitted to the Committee, the Secretariat hoped that it would stimulate further analysis and recommendations.

7. **Mr. Asadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the World Summit for Social Development had focused the international policy debate on social development. The Summit had identified Governments as having the prime responsibility for ensuring social development and human well-being, while recognizing the important role played by civil society and the private sector.

8. Social development underpinned human development, and was necessary to create the national and international environment conducive to the overall progress and welfare of human beings worldwide. Social justice was pivotal to modern society; it should

not fall victim to partisan, ideological or political controversy.

9. Poverty eradication was central to social development and human well-being and should be the focus of national socio-economic strategies and international cooperation for development. The establishment, in the Millennium Declaration, of the target of cutting the level of extreme poverty by half by the year 2015 was a further reaffirmation of the critical importance of combating poverty; moreover, the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty called for a global campaign to that end.

10. Many Governments throughout the developing world had been taking measures to fight poverty at the national level, although the external environment had hampered their attempts. It was axiomatic that a favourable international environment and effective international cooperation for development were critical in helping national Governments devise and implement their poverty-eradication programmes. While commending the approach of the Secretary-General's report (A/56/140) in that regard, the Group of 77 and China also supported the proposal to establish a world solidarity fund for poverty eradication. Furthermore, the sharing of experiences and best practices in social development played a crucial role in cooperation efforts and required the active engagement and support of the relevant agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system.

11. The concepts of social protection, provision of safety nets and reducing vulnerability were indivisible components of social development, particularly in view of the debilitating impact of globalization on all aspects of life in developing societies. The debate on social protection during the thirty-ninth session of the Commission for Social Development had been most useful and illuminating and should continue. The Commission's programme of work for 2002-2006 should help the campaign to promote social development on a global scale, and the Group of 77 and China reaffirmed their commitment to participate actively in the respective discussions. The theme for 2002 recognized the importance of the integration of social and economic policy. In that respect, the impact of national and international macroeconomic policies on the social situation needed constant assessment and economic policies should take into consideration poverty-eradication strategies, social-sector expenditure and social-protection programmes.

12. The Economic and Social Council had recommended that the General Assembly should examine how best to address the reviews of the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences of the 1990s, including their format and periodicity. In that regard, there was a need for interaction and cooperation among all key actors, including Governments, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and international financial institutions. It was equally important to ensure complementarity between international cooperation for social development and other multilateral processes.

13. Achievement of social development had become a matter of will and resources. The will was present but an effective system of international cooperation for development to support national efforts had yet to materialize. It was necessary to identify new and innovative sources of funding for social development. The proposed advocacy campaign could also help in that respect.

14. **Mr. Goffin** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, and, in addition, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Malta and Turkey, said that, in the Millennium Declaration, heads of State and Government had reaffirmed their commitment to uphold the values and principles of human dignity and equality and had expressed their certainty that globalization could be a positive force for the people of the world. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action of 1995 had already constituted a new social contract for the world; five years later, States had reiterated their wish to implement the commitments made in Copenhagen and to make globalization more human.

15. There could be no sustainable economic development without social development. A broad understanding of development was the fundamental political achievement of Copenhagen and the conferences, summits and special sessions of the General Assembly of the past 10 years. The European Union further considered that a gender-specific approach was essential in all social policies and that the strengthening of women's power of action and their participation should be a prime objective in any social-protection policy.

16. The year 2001 had been devoted to operational follow-up of the commitments made at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly. On the occasion of the thirty-ninth session of the Commission for Social Development, the European Union had produced some original ideas on social protection: for example, that, contrary to received ideas about the harmful effects of globalization on poverty, there was no systematic link between openness to globalization and increased poverty; that the campaign to halve poverty by 2015 should be part of a social-protection framework; that social protection should be seen as an investment in human capital and expenditure on it contributed to growth; that social protection was primarily the responsibility of Governments, but civil society as a whole should be associated with efforts to reform social-protection systems.

17. The European Union also wished to stress that the victims of HIV/AIDS should receive adequate social protection; that minimum standards should be set for social protection tailored to individual countries; and that it unreservedly supported the Secretary-General's "Global Compact" as an instrument for promoting the responsibility of the private sector for social development a l social protection.

18. It welcomed the compilation of summaries of reports on the outcome of the World Summit and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly provided by the United Nations system (A/56/140, para. 26). That compilation showed the system's commitment to the implementation of the decisions taken at the twenty-fourth special session. The European Union reiterated its belief that the Commission for Social Development was the best instrument to follow up such commitments, and must provide a forum for the exchange of good practice and experience among practitioners of social development. It attached particular importance to what had been agreed at the twenty-fourth special session regarding the mandates entrusted to the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development.

19. The European Union welcomed the commitments made at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in May 2001 concerning observance of the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the need to invest in social infrastructure, to reduce excessive military expenditure and to strengthen the health and education sectors. It further welcomed the Economic and Social Council's decision to devote its high-level debate in 2002 to the strengthening of human resources, especially in health and education.

20. It also wished to draw attention to matters concerning young people, the elderly, persons with disabilities and the family. The Commission for Social Development at its next session would consider mechanisms for monitoring the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, while the Special Rapporteur on Disability would present proposals on how to strengthen the Rules. In preparation for the Commission's discussions on young people, it was important to reflect on a more integrated, across-the-board policy to incorporate their interests in all planning, decision-making and implementation. The European Union would also include a number of young people in its delegations to the General Assembly's twenty-seventh special session, on children.

21. Preparations for the Second World Assembly on Ageing to be held in Madrid in April 2002 were a matter of priority for the European Union. It would be an excellent occasion for responding to the challenges and opportunities of ageing; dialogue between the generations would become a key instrument in social development. A follow-up regional conference would be held in Berlin in September 2002.

22. The importance the European Union attached to the integration of all groups in society emerged from the conclusions of the European Council meeting held in Stockholm in March 2001. The EU had undertaken to modernize the European social model in order to create a dynamic Union of active social States and had set itself the objectives of improving the quality of employment promoting social inclusion, encouraging participation of the social partners in managing change, ensuring the responsibility of enterprises and designing social-protection systems, including reliable retirement schemes. That meeting was an example of the European Union's will to give a direct and material form to the results of the World Summit and the special session. Its members were determined to improve still further their systems of social protection and were committed to continuing the discussion on the future of social policies within the European Union itself and within the United Nations.

23. **Mr. Mmualefe** (Botswana), speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), said that SADC countries were engaged in

implementing a partnership agreement for poverty eradication signed in Cotonou, Benin, in June 2000. The HIV/AIDS pandemic had recently also emerged as a further major constraint to social development in the subregion, with women and young people worst affected. SADC countries — key partners in the recently updated global strategy on HIV/AIDS — were working tirelessly to reduce the vulnerability of individuals at risk, to develop strategies to alleviate the social and economic impact of the pandemic and to promote research into vaccines and microbicides. International assistance remained a priority, particularly in view of the need for widespread access to affordable treatment.

24. The ramifications of armed conflict in Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo continued to hamper the development efforts of those countries; SADC Governments remained committed to the interrelated process of peace and development.

25. Recognizing that education was a key to competitiveness in the global economy, SADC countries had reformed domestic policies to stress basic education for all. The issue of the elderly also being crucial, SADC welcomed preparations for the Second World Assembly on Ageing, and stressed the importance of regional initiatives in that connection.

26. **Mr. Maquieira** (Chile), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, paid tribute to the Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development, who would be retiring in 2002.

27. His delegation had observed with consternation that the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 not only had caused irreparable loss of life and enormous material damage in the United States of America, but also were likely to aggravate the expected trend towards a world recession. That would significantly affect developing countries by increasing poverty, vulnerability and marginalization and would also have consequences for the industrialized world, which had already had to downsize its growth forecasts for the coming year.

28. Combating terrorism had come to have transcendental importance on the international agenda. The United Nations must not only legitimize international action in defence of peace and security but must vigorously pursue the implementation of the agreements reached at the World Summit for Social Development and the new initiatives adopted five years later to eradicate poverty, promote social integration and strengthen human security.

29. One of the main objectives of the international community was to reduce extreme poverty by half by 2015; combating poverty was an imperative, not an option. Forthcoming meetings of crucial importance included the next session of the Commission for Social Development, which must tackle the integration of economic and social policies so as to permit markets to function efficiently within a framework of ethical values. Those meetings should also adopt agreements leading to better inter-institutional cooperation among United Nations agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, in order to assist States in improving the quality of life of their societies.

30. The Rio Group was committed to the fight against social and economic exclusion as being fundamental for the consolidation of democracy and the building of a more just and safer world, as stated in the Declaration adopted in Santiago in August 2001. Its commitment included the adoption of firm and coordinated measures to achieve economic and social development based on decent employment, sound education and comprehensive health services for the most needy sectors. It looked forward to the firm support of the international community in that effort.

31. **Mr. Paolillo** (Uruguay), speaking on behalf of the States members of the South American Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the associated States Bolivia and Chile, said that the basic themes of the eradication of poverty, creation of employment and social integration in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action were currently being considered in the context of globalization and other challenges. At its twenty-fourth special session, the General Assembly had called for a sharing of best experiences and practices in establishing systems of social protection or improving systems already in place, and had included the integration of economic and social policies among the new initiatives for social development. MERCOSUR and its associated States supported those ideas, and had taken appropriate action on the understanding that achieving those objectives was a long-term task.

32. MERCOSUR and its associated States had drawn up an agenda based on the Buenos Aires Charter of Social Commitment of June 2000. That had been followed by the commitment of Gramado, Brazil, in

September 2000, establishing joint social development goals, and the Presidential Summit of Florianopolis, Brazil, in December 2000, at which the Meeting of Ministers of Social Development of MERCOSUR and its associated States had been institutionalized as the Group's political and technical forum in that field. Meeting in March 2001, that forum had dealt with the questions of inequality, poverty and child labour as priority challenges throughout the region, for which programmes would be elaborated by a technical group. The Ministers had proposed the elaboration of regional strategies for the eradication of poverty and child labour as the main thrust of macroeconomic management with a view to achieving sustainable growth.

33. In addition to the challenges of the social agenda of MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile, consideration needed to be given to the process of globalization in the international environment. Certain difficulties with a direct impact on the developing countries of the region still remained to be solved, such as the achievement of a non-discriminatory system of international trade with a fairer distribution of the benefits of economic growth.

34. The countries of MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile were convinced that the combination of national, regional and international efforts would make it possible to achieve the goals proposed at the Copenhagen Summit and the twenty-fourth special session for the promotion of social progress, well-being and higher standards of living for all.

35. **Mr. Amoros Nuñez** (Cuba) said that the world situation had become increasingly complex because of the events of the past month, but it was important to bear in mind that the developing world saw no prospects for relief from mounting poverty, unemployment, ill-health and nutrition. Those conditions continued despite the commitments made at the Copenhagen Summit and in the Millennium Declaration. The targets for international cooperation set at Copenhagen had not been met at all, and globalization, which could have brought about progress and prosperity, had only increased social and economic marginalization worldwide.

36. The rich countries must not shirk their responsibility for fulfilling their commitments by attempting to make social development strictly a domestic matter. Those commitments, reaffirmed at the twenty-fourth special session, were the best means available to foster an international environment that would guarantee social progress for all. Economic policies and models should be evaluated as to whether they would promote social justice. Moreover, efforts to reduce international financial volatility and to find innovative sources of funding for social development would complement those commitments.

37. Cuba had successfully implemented social development policies based on social justice. Its youth were given high priority, and the Government was implementing the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond at both the national and international levels. By the same token, the Government saw the well-being of its elderly as an indicator of development. The elderly were guaranteed free medical care and social security, which had helped to raise life expectancy to 75 years. Cuba would work to ensure that the forthcoming Second World Assembly on Ageing would result in strategies to cope with the increasing number of elderly in many countries and improve their well-being. It also placed high priority on services to the disabled, in the areas of health, education, employment, culture and sports.

38. Cuba had achieved a great deal and had shown that social development could be achieved even without major economic development and that a just distribution of wealth could promote economic progress, despite the economic blockade imposed by the United States.

39. **Mr. Roshdy** (Egypt) said that various international instruments had confirmed that the right to development was a basic human right and that it had economic, social, cultural and political dimensions. Although the Copenhagen Declaration had contributed new momentum to the development issue, inequality both within and among States had continued to grow, and the technical cooperation provided to developing countries by the United Nations system had been reduced. The international community and donor countries must accordingly intensify efforts to reverse that trend.

40. In particular, social development strategies must reflect respect for cultural and economic diversity and not impose approaches ill-adapted to local conditions. It was not merely a question of intensifying economic activity: a more equitable distribution of global wealth was also needed. Although primarily a national

responsibility, social development could not indeed be achieved without international support, to include debt relief, technical and financial assistance and the removal of trade barriers. It was a matter of concern that the international community had failed to fulfil its commitments in respect of official development assistance (ODA).

41. Social development could not be addressed, moreover, without reference to the right of all peoples to self-determination, including full sovereignty over their natural resources.

42. **Mr. Lee** Ho-jin (Republic of Korea) stressed the significance of the results of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, especially with regard to poverty, HIV/AIDS and debt relief. The Millennium Summit and the thirty-ninth session of the Commission for Social Development had also resulted in fundamental, internationally agreed frameworks for a safe, stable and just society, further fuelling efforts to overcome poverty, promote full employment and eradicate obstacles to social integration.

43. The recent financial crisis in Asia had damaged labour relations and had led to a steep fall in employment rates, weakening the social fabric and threatening the further alienation of vulnerable groups. His Government had nevertheless effectively risen to the challenge. Fully committed to social development, it had implemented extensive schemes to establish a system of "productive welfare" in line with World Summit for Social Development goals.

44. It was increasingly recognized that education constituted the primary tool for social integration. The Government had accordingly made education a top priority. It also welcomed the decision of the special session to intensify political commitment to close the gender gap in primary and secondary education by 2005 and to ensure free, compulsory and universal primary education for both boys and girls by 2015. Investments to enhance the quality of education at all levels were an indispensable part of the efforts to expand employment and promote gender equality in schools and the workplace.

45. Despite its own economic difficulties in the wake of the financial crisis in Asia, the Government had maintained its commitment to official development assistance (ODA), which included cooperative programmes emphasizing local ownership and promoting human resources development in partnership with least developed countries. Such programmes also focused on capacity-building in information and communication technologies.

46. To reduce marginalization and maximize the positive aspects of globalization, adequate resource management was also indispensable. Indeed, economic policy was inextricably linked to social policy, as the special session of the General Assembly and the thirty-ninth session of the Commission for Social Development had reaffirmed. In that connection, his delegation supported the scheduled series of expert group meetings on the social impact of economic policies, as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report (A/56/140, para. 32).

47. **Mr. Yahya** (Malaysia), describing the context in which the World Summit for Social Development had been held, said that 1995 had seen the age of globalization well under way, with opportunities for greater prosperity appearing endless. However, over a billion people had continued to live in extreme poverty, with millions of people unemployed, and a growing number of societies breaking up along racial, ethnic or social "fault lines".

48. The twenty-fourth special session had shown that poverty, unemployment, inequality, social exclusion, discrimination, systemic economic crises and civil conflicts had only grown more acute in the years following the Summit. Poverty remained the greatest challenge, necessitating sustainable and equitable growth worldwide, as well as collective and coordinated efforts to achieve Summit goals and to address disparities. Despite the best efforts of developing countries to ensure an enabling environment for social development, unfettered globalization had rendered global goals unattainable.

49. In a globalized world, poverty and social disintegration constituted real threats to international peace and prosperity. Although trade in recent years had increased, there had been a sustained decline in ODA. To uphold peace and prosperity, the international community must shoulder a shared responsibility in managing worldwide economic and social development.

50. His delegation was concerned that social violence against minorities, women and children continued unabated throughout the world and that the scourges of narcotic drugs, transnational crime and diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS were spreading

rapidly. Such challenges were beyond the capacities of individual States; they necessitated genuine partnerships at the international level. In particular, developed countries must continue to assist developing countries in implementing their social and human development programmes.

51. Malaysia's national development programme, for its part, incorporated social integration policies targeting vulnerable groups, and focusing on the need to balance growth with environmental and natural resource protection. Civil society and the private sector were fully involved in national social development initiatives.

52. Given that 42 per cent of the country's population was under the age of 25, youth policies and programmes were accorded increasing priority. The aim was to build a resilient youth community able to contribute to nation-building and capable of facing the challenges of a rapidly developing nation. Emphasis was also accorded to the strengthening of the family and to the role of parents in inculcating moral and spiritual values.

53. With regard to people with disabilities, Malaysia was fully engaged at all levels in promoting their equality and full participation in society, inter alia through a national advisory and consultative council for disabled persons, which helped formulate legislation to protect their rights and to prohibit abuse, neglect and discrimination. Tax relief was also provided for the care and support of people with disabilities, and a governmental mechanism focusing on education for children with special needs had been established. Programmes were also being implemented to provide training and employment for such persons; they included community-based rehabilitation.

54. In respect of older persons, his Government viewed preparation of the entire population for the later stages of life as an integral part of its economic and social development policies. In particular, planning for older persons must take cognizance of changes in the characteristics and expectations of older persons, such as the need for greater financial and personal independence, and the importance of stressing mutual reliance over dependency.

55. **Ms. Alvarez** (Dominican Republic), referring to item 109, said that during the twenty-first century, the world would need to come to grips with the social and political changes brought about by increased longevity. The time remaining for preparation of the 2002 Second World Assembly on Ageing was short, but the Preparatory Committee would continue its efforts at its December session to finalize a long-term strategy. It would need to focus on substantive issues. Her delegation wished to offer some preliminary comments.

56. First, the World Assembly should focus on ageing and development. The increase in longevity had been a revolution in developed and developing countries alike, and "productive ageing" — the continuing contribution that older persons could make to their societies — must be stressed. Physical changes might require modification in the nature of that contribution, but with proper policies it would not diminish. There must be a clear recognition, however, of the differences between the situations of older persons in the developing and the developed world. For instance, developing countries often had more flexibility to deal with issues of ageing.

57. Second, productive ageing was related to the central development issue — the eradication of poverty. In developing countries, poverty applied more often to families than to individuals, as older persons were usually part of a multigenerational household. Third, the revised International Plan of Action must have a clear time frame, which could realistically be set at 20 years, or one generation. Fourth, the exercise of human rights by older persons might require a specific international instrument. Finally, the plan must include a mechanism for implementation over an extended period.

58. The human and financial resources of the United Nations system devoted to issues of ageing were very small, and if those issues were to be dealt with seriously, that situation could not continue. Of course, ageing involved many organizations of the United Nations system. In other areas, for instance HIV/AIDS, where the problem was serious and the responsibility diffuse, special programmes had been created. Although a "global agency on ageing" — as suggested by some experts — might not be warranted, a system-wide programme on ageing would have a reasonable chance of implementing the Plan of Action.

59. **Mr. Apeland** (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)) said that the International Year of Volunteers in 2001 had provided an opportunity for the International Federation to integrate the activities of the Year with its programmes

relevant to vulnerable children, youth and older persons. As an international organization, it had joined with the United Nations Volunteers in promoting the ideals of the Year to the parliaments of the world at the recent session of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The Year also marked the beginning of a new approach to volunteerism, especially with respect to contacts with entities beyond the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement.

60. IFRC was working closely with its partners and with parliaments, and it intended to further its cooperation with States over the next two years. It had undertaken to recognize the importance of volunteers, thus complementing the coverage of needs not met by the formal service-delivery system, and to introduce or update legislation to facilitate the work of voluntary organizations.

61. The Second World Assembly on Ageing would provide another opportunity to highlight the value of older people as volunteers. IFRC would make a special effort to bring before the Assembly a series of issues relating to older people and population movements, HIV/AIDS, and volunteerism, which were of great concern to National Societies and required international attention. Many National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also relied on young people, despite their own vulnerability, as volunteers to meet day-to-day challenges. IFRC would be exploring new approaches to the involvement of youth in volunteerism.

62. IFRC had linked many of its programmes across different fields to the struggle against HIV/AIDS, and the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS had made it possible to emphasize the importance of dealing with the epidemic on all fronts. Young volunteers were being used to provide peer education at the community level in Ghana and were being trained as junior health workers in the Philippines to reach street children to help them access essential health services — just two examples of the many ways youth volunteers were involved in their own communities.

63. IFRC would build on the foundation established during the International Year of Volunteers, and it trusted that others in the international community would do likewise.

64. **Mr. Doryan** (World Bank) said that a powerful phrase from the civil rights movement in the United States, "Keep your eyes on the prize", spoke directly to the issues of social opportunity, human rights and development which would come before the Committee. The World Bank had stated that three core elements were needed to eradicate poverty: first, expand economic opportunity for poor people through economic growth, making markets work better and building up their assets, such as land and education; second, empowerment of the poor by strengthening their ability to shape decisions that affected their lives and removing discrimination; and third, security, through reducing their vulnerability and building safety nets and social protection.

65. The World Bank had an economic development perspective, but the Committee would approach poverty eradication from the perspective of the right to development. That right was based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination; dignity, through freedom of choice, autonomy and liberty; and common humanity, through mutual respect and solidarity. Both perspectives were complementary, and poverty reduction was the most important contribution that could be made to the improvement of equity and justice.

66. In its new agenda on social development, the World Bank had grasped the fact that, for development to be sustainable, poor people must not be "targets" of poverty reduction and other development efforts, but must be full owners of and partners in the process. Progress had been made in that more equitable and inclusive approach to development: almost 70 per cent of the operations its Board had approved during its 2001 fiscal year included involvement by civil society.

67. Many of the lofty goals set at the special session and the Millennium Summit would go unmet unless the international community created clear and targeted objectives for the implementation of those goals, clear implementation plans and coherent partnerships and alliances. After 11 September, the world no longer had the luxury of waiting to integrate social and economic policy, or learning to work together more effectively. Addressing the question of poverty was addressing the question of peace.

Organization of work

68. **The Chairman** asked whether the Committee wished to meet concurrently with the general debate in the plenary Assembly to be held from 10 to 16

November. He recommended strongly that the Committee should remain in session during the week beginning 12 November, since the new United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and several special rapporteurs on human rights were scheduled to address the Committee during that week and their presentations could not be rescheduled. Furthermore, should work be suspended, the resumed first session of the Preparatory Committee for the Second World Assembly on Ageing would be in jeopardy and it would be impossible to complete the Committee's programme of work by 28 November.

69. However, in order to give delegations maximum flexibility, he also proposed that no action on any proposals should be taken at that time. Furthermore, the President of the General Assembly had given assurances that, for the purposes of the fifty-sixth session, Committees would not be bound by the provisions of General Assembly resolutions prohibiting them from meeting concurrently with the general debate.

70. He suggested that the Committee should continue meeting during the week beginning 12 November.

71. *It was so decided.*

72. **The Chairman** also suggested that, at every Thursday afternoon meeting, the Committee should take action, as appropriate, on any draft proposals.

73. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.

United Nations A/C.3/56/SR.4

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Chairman: Mr. Al-Hinai ..... (Oman)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 27: Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (*continued*) (A/56/140)

Agenda item 108: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (*continued*) (A/56/3, A/56/57-E/2001/5, A/56/73-E/2001/68 and Add.1, A/56/114-E/2001/93 and Add.1, A/56/169, A/56/180, A/56/288-E/2001/104; A/C.3/56/L.2 and L.3)

Agenda item 109: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing (*continued*) (A/56/152)

1. **Ms. Ahmed** (Sudan) endorsed the statement made on 8 October by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77. In the final document of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to the follow-up of the World Summit for Social Development, Member States had made recommendations for improving the conditions for social development worldwide, while endeavouring in particular to put an end to poverty and to remedy the harmful impact of globalization on the developing countries.

2. In spite of the efforts made by Governments and the international community since the Copenhagen summit meeting to promote development at all levels, there was still a long way to go to secure lasting social development for all the peoples of the planet. Social development was the responsibility of all States, and that required firm political will nationally as well as internationally. In his report on the First United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) (A/56/229), the Secretary-General stated that in spite of the progress made in combating poverty, it was unlikely that many countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, would be able to achieve national social development goals. As the Secretary-General pointed out in his report, official development assistance was still vitally important in funding development efforts in developing countries, including the Sudan, if the stated goal of eradicating poverty by the year 2015 was to be attained. Social development would not come about without concerted action by the international community and compliance with obligations relating to official development assistance to the poorest countries.

3. There must also be an effective and fair solution of the external debt problem, in order to alleviate the debt burden on the developing countries, because of its damaging impact on social development. Funding must be guaranteed for the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative. Likewise, it was important to pursue the reform of the international economic system and to ensure the transparency and stability of the international financial system. In particular, international institutions must become more democratic in order to be able to respond more quickly and effectively to development problems, in the context of an integrated world financial system.

4. It was also important to help the developing countries, and especially the least developed among them, in becoming more competitive on international markets, consolidating their infrastructures and benefiting from the transfer of technology, as well as in improving their human resources and building up their industrial capacity, in order to equip them to overcome the difficulties caused by the establishment of a globalized system.

5. It was admitted that the problem of poverty and inequality could not be resolved without transforming certain social structures. It was the role of the international community to mobilize financial resources to promote the strengthening of those structures. The Sudan wanted to see an international climate which favoured social development, and it took the view that the right to development was a fundamental right. There must be a stop to unilateral economic sanctions. Everybody, everywhere, must be able to obtain medicines and food. That was a fundamental right of every human being, as the General Assembly had said.

6. Endemic diseases were another issue that States had to deal with. Malaria was a major public health problem in many countries, particularly in Africa, and the growing number of victims of HIV/AIDS was another grave threat.

7. The Sudan had made significant progress in the area of social development, having adopted an efficient anti-poverty strategy. Programmes had been adopted to generate employment and create an attractive labour market in rural areas by supporting small commercial

enterprises and agricultural producers and their families. The Sudanese authorities were endeavouring to promote a system of values based on social interdependence and to give greater help to young people and retired people. The Sudan contributed to the World Youth Programme of Action to the Year 2000 and Beyond, supported youth and volunteer programmes, and had set up programmes for young people under the Ministry for Youth. The authorities continued to attach great importance to education, from both qualitative and quantitative viewpoints.

8. Her Government also gave considerable attention to the needs of older persons, a vital facet of social development. Her delegation looked forward with interest to the Second World Assembly on Ageing to be held in Madrid in 2002, and wished to take part in preparatory work for that Assembly.

9. In order to promote the social integration of persons with disabilities, her Government had created a National Council for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, pursuant to the relevant General Assembly resolution.

10. Her Government placed particular emphasis on programmes to promote and support the family so that it could fully play its part in social development, of which it was a vital cornerstone. The authorities were therefore preparing special programmes in anticipation of the tenth anniversary in 2004 of the International Year of the Family.

11. Collective measures to promote social development were at the very heart of the actions undertaken by the international community. The latter should cooperate closely in its consideration of such measures, taking account of the current political context, in order to improve the situation of all human beings throughout the world.

12. **Mr. Valdés** (Chile), speaking on agenda item 109 on behalf of the Rio Group, said that its member States were firmly committed to the preparatory process for the Second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held in Madrid in April 2002. The Assembly would provide an opportunity to reflect on the reality of the ageing of societies and its linkage with development and to evaluate progress achieved in the 20 years since the first Assembly and set goals for the future. The Rio Group was committed to the success of the Assembly, which would be enriched by contributions from non-governmental organizations and from a forum devoted to research, and believed that collaboration and dialogue between international organizations, Governments, civil society and the academic community would expedite the elaboration and adoption of a concrete and effective plan of action.

13. The ageing of society, which resulted from significant increases in life expectancy, was being experienced in both developed and developing countries. As for the quality of life, however, the situation was very different in the developing countries. The goals of development for all and the eradication of poverty were far from being attained, and the expansion of employment, particularly in the formal sector, and of the social protection that came with it was hard to achieve. There was often a lack of financing for pension systems and a fall in the quality of social services provided to older persons. Older persons lived longer, but often did not have sufficient resources to enable them to live independently, so that they became burdens for their families which frequently had difficulties meeting their own needs. Declines in family incomes, particularly in rural areas, made it necessary for older family members to work and their active working lives were extended, endangering their health and even their lives. The exodus of rural populations to cities resulted in the separation of older persons from the younger members of their families, forcing them to perform tasks which at times exceeded their physical abilities. The recent phenomenon of international migration flows accelerated by globalization represented an additional burden for older persons: not only were they deprived of the assistance of younger relatives but they also had to take care of children left behind by their parents. In countries affected by HIV/AIDS, caring for the sick and raising the children of parents affected by the illness also became the responsibility of older persons. The latter were often marginalized and, with failing strength and reduced family incomes, had to cope with the grave material and psychological situation of the children.

14. It was undeniable that older persons had the capacity to lead meaningful and significant lives. To enable them to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by increased life expectancy, Governments, the international community, particularly international organizations and international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society must create an appropriate environment, focusing efforts on the eradication of poverty in order to achieve people-

centred development, enabling the elderly to grow old in health and dignity.

15. The countries of the Rio Group were committed to that objective and would make every effort to ensure that it was adequately reflected in the plan of action which would emanate from the forthcoming World Assembly. They hoped that the Assembly would also be an opportunity to listen to the voices of older persons and benefit from their contributions, to meet their needs, but also to integrate them fully in the life of societies. The Rio Group States thanked Spain for its offer to host the Assembly, and expressed their appreciation to the Preparatory Committee for the quality of the draft plan of action; they were ready to begin without delay deliberations and negotiations on the draft.

16. **Ms. Samah** (Algeria) said that despite concerted and well-targeted action by the international community to eradicate poverty, humanize globalization and redress inequalities, much remained to be done to turn commitments into reality.

17. Improved living conditions, by extending life expectancy, meant that developed countries faced the challenge of an ageing population as now did developing countries, who did not have the same human and material resources at their disposal. Although the issue should be addressed by the Second World Assembly on Ageing, it was important, in order to preserve the consensus thus far achieved, to avoid introducing into the preparatory work certain concepts, such as the rights-based approach to development, or euthanasia, which lent themselves to controversy or were contrary to many countries' laws or moral and religious values.

18. Convinced that social justice depended on the integration of all social groups, Algeria in its Constitution had provided for the protection of those of its citizens who were unable or no longer able to work, such as disabled persons, children and older persons; the State also involved many public agencies in its activities in that connection.

19. Social services gave priority to training, the strengthening of financial services and sustainable means of development, health, communications and the legal and regulatory field.

20. The Government also focused on the family which was a tool for social cohesion and economic development.

21. The system of cooperatives — providing a framework for mutual assistance and solidarity and a care mechanism that contributed indisputably to the country's economic and social development — was governed by the same arrangement, supplemented by implementing decrees for each activity sector.

22. Her delegation wished to elaborate on the guidelines contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General on cooperatives in social development (A/56/73-E/2001/68) by recommending the establishment, within the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), of a technical and administrative support structure for the cooperative movement in developing countries; the setting up of an international fund for the development of the cooperative movement; the creation, under United Nations auspices, of an international cooperative institute; and the organization every five years, under the aegis of the United Nations, of a world congress of heads of the most representative cooperatives from continents, regions and subregions, to assess the state of the cooperative movement in the world.

23. In order to create an enabling environment for development and for the elimination of poverty, in accordance with commitments made at various summits and conferences, the international community should provide active support for the cooperative movement, which represented an instrument for development in general, and for social development in particular.

24. **Ms. Vioti** (Brazil) said that she wished to align herself with the statements made by the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77, of Chile on behalf of the Rio Group and of Uruguay on behalf of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR). In Brazil, the consolidation of democratic institutions and the strengthening of participatory mechanisms had acquired new impetus in the latter half of the 1990s, permitting increasing partnership between the Government, civil society and the private sector. The difficulties Brazil faced in order to eradicate poverty and to reduce the uneven distribution of wealth made development an economic and social priority for the country. Aware that

economic growth was an insufficient objective, the Government also directed its efforts towards realizing all fundamental rights, promoting equity and combating social exclusion.

25. The agenda agreed at the World Summit on Social Development, held at Copenhagen in 1995, remained fully valid. Some of the commitments agreed in 2000 at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to a five-year follow-up of the World Summit, had acquired special significance in the light of recent events. These commitments included increasing and improving access to international markets of products and services of developing countries by reducing trade barriers and eliminating non-tariff barriers; facilitating the transfer of technologies to those countries; and reducing the negative impacts of economic instability. After a year of moderate growth, the world economy was undergoing a downturn whose effects would visibly restrict the ability of many developing countries to address their development needs. In that context, international cooperation to further the implementation of the objectives agreed in 1995 and 2000 was all the more relevant.

26. The Government was engaged in the preparatory process of the Second World Conference on Ageing, to be held at Madrid in 2002, and she was confident that the plan of action to be adopted on that occasion would set new standards for international cooperation and would provide the necessary guidance to deal with the many challenges that developing countries, in particular, were beginning to face as a result of population ageing in such areas as the financing of pensions, social welfare, access to services, public health, infrastructure and employment.

27. Since 1994, Brazil had pursued a National Policy on Ageing implemented by five regional forums which ensured coordination in close cooperation with non-governmental organizations. A pension system had been nonetheless established at the federal level to provide the equivalent of a minimum wage to individuals over 67 years of age who did not have family support or the means to provide for their own subsistence.

28. A similar stipend was being provided to disabled persons who were unable to work or live independently. In 1999, Brazil had signed the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, which was currently being considered by the Congress. The State Secretariat for Social Assistance ensured the implementation of policies for the qualification and rehabilitation of disabled persons, aimed at guaranteeing their social integration and full participation in society.

29. Together with other federal agencies and the private sector, the State Secretariat for Social Assistance was implementing two larger projects for youth. The project on the role of youth in social and human development had already prepared more than 10,000 young people in the 15-to-17-year-old bracket to serve their own communities in the areas of health, sports, culture, tourism, the environment and social services. The project on youth centres had led to the establishment of 40 facilities throughout Brazilian territory which offered young people a place to meet, obtain information on the various health and social services available to them and have access to online services through the free use of computers.

30. **Mr. Kallehauge** (Denmark), speaking on agenda item 108, said that the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities should continue to guide the work of the international community, and that the Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development had done a tremendous job in promoting the use of the Standard Rules. Much remained to be done, however, particularly at the national level.

31. Denmark, for its part, was striving to improve the situation of persons with disabilities through international cooperation. In November 2000, it had hosted the Nordic Conference on Development Cooperation and the Disability Dimension, which had culminated in a communiqué in which the Nordic countries undertook to promote the inclusion of the disability aspect in all development activities of the United Nations, the World Bank, the European Union and international development organizations. Denmark was working to convince UNICEF and UNESCO, in particular, to include in their programmes initiatives aimed at improving the lives of people with disabilities. In the context of its bilateral assistance to Nepal and Uganda, for example, Denmark ensured that education was open to disabled children.

32. The Seminar on Human Rights and Disability, convened by the Special Rapporteur on Disability at

the Almåsa Conference Centre in November 2000, had led to the conclusion that disability was not only a social but also a human rights issue. Furthermore, the trend over the past decade had apparently been to establish rights for persons with disabilities as a supplement to traditional welfare policy, which suggested that the two aspects should be stressed at both the national and international levels.

33. **Mr. Jørgensen** (Denmark), speaking in his capacity as the representative of the Danish Youth Council, said that the prudent decision to postpone the special session on children in view of recent events should not lead to an indefinite postponement, since children's rights were of great importance.

34. Since millions of children lived in extreme poverty, Member States must fulfil their responsibilities with a view to ensuring that official development assistance, at the very least, reached established United Nations targets. In order to mobilize youth properly as a necessary development resource, more knowledge on their involvement and impact was needed. His Government and the Danish Youth Council therefore encouraged the United Nations Development Programme to give special attention to youth in its annual Human Development Report, for example, by fleshing out general statistics and documentation with specific information on young people from 15 to 24 years of age. The Danish Youth Council also proposed that consideration should be given to devoting a future Human Development Report to youth.

35. Since young people risked being infected with AIDS or HIV for lack of the necessary information or proper reproductive health services, governments should include information on sexual and reproductive health in the curricula of all educational institutions in order to help young people understand their own sexuality and take responsible decisions.

36. Many young people the world over would never have an opportunity to influence decisions that directly affected them. Referring to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, he said that the Danish Youth Council urged Member States to ensure that their delegations to the General Assembly included more youth representatives of both sexes.

37. **Mr. Shen** Guofang (China) said that the international community as a whole had made great efforts to implement the recommendations made in the final documents of the World Summit for Social Development and the special session of the General Assembly on social development, but that those efforts were meeting serious obstacles. According to the *Report on the World Social Situation, 2001*, since the 1990s income inequality worldwide had gone from bad to worse and the income gap between developed and developing countries, urban and rural areas, men and women, had on the whole become increasingly wide. In a global workforce of 3 billion, between 750 million and 1 billion were under-employed; in the field of health, the traditional illnesses and new types of infectious disease, especially HIV/AIDS, were a drain on the resources for social development.

38. In order to translate into reality the proposals and initiatives put forward in those final documents, countries must join in a common effort in three areas: the creation of a peaceful and stable international environment, a stepped-up international cooperation for social development and the defence of the interests of vulnerable groups.

39. Currently, terrorism had become a major threat to world peace and stability, and in some regions and countries, protracted armed conflict and warfare had caused such enormous loss of life and property that they had undermined the future social development of the local people. The situation would not improve unless the countries of the world fulfilled their responsibility to maintain peace and stability and strengthened international cooperation against terrorism, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and unless they sought peaceful solutions to enduring conflicts and wars.

40. Regarding international cooperation for social development, while the major responsibility to ensure the social development of their people rested on Governments, yet the international community as a whole, as globalization proceeded, also had important responsibilities. It should take appropriate action to halt the deterioration of the environment, the diminishing of resources and the unchecked spread of terrible diseases in the developing countries. Furthermore, in the common interest of mankind, the developed countries should fulfil their pledges to provide official development assistance, offer financial and technical assistance to the developing countries, find a fair and honest solution to the debt problems of the poor countries, and help the developing countries out of poverty as quickly as possible.

41. Countries should fully accommodate in their policies the interests of vulnerable groups — the elderly, women, children, the disabled — for only by so doing could a healthy, comprehensive, coordinated and well-balanced social development be achieved.

42. His Government had always attached importance to social development. Since adopting its opening-up policy and maintaining a rapid economic growth over the past 20 years and more, China had succeeded in adequately feeding and clothing its over 200 million rural poor. With its population of 1.3 billion, however, China still needed to accelerate its economic growth, further improve the living conditions of its people, eradicate poverty, and invest more in education, health care and public hygiene services. His Government would do everything possible to meet those daunting challenges and would take effective measures to achieve coordinated, sustained economic and social development.

43. **Ms. Neskorozhana** (Ukraine), speaking on agenda item 27, said that the review of the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Summit for Social Development had made it clear that despite the efforts of the international community, there had been little change in the social situation. Globalization and the opportunities for economic growth had not done away with the disparities among and within countries and, in spite of scientific advances and the technological revolution, hunger, disease and poverty had still not been eradicated. In order to bridge the gap between the poor and the rich, it was necessary to rethink the structure of international economic and financial cooperation. At the same time, every State should play its own crucial role in advancing people-centred sustainable development, which meant pursuing policies aimed at eradicating poverty, enhancing productive employment and guaranteeing universal and equal access to basic social services, social protection and support for vulnerable groups.

44. In Ukraine, the eradication of poverty was at the centre of national policies and specifically of the economic and social development strategies for the years 2000-2004 and the Ukraine-2010 programme. Poverty-prevention measures — increasing the minimum wage and improving the social security system — had been adopted and since the best way of fighting poverty and promoting social cohesion was to ensure full employment, a general employment plan had been developed for the creation of new businesses and the offering of tax incentives to businesses willing to establish themselves in demographically disadvantaged areas.

45. However, the country was experiencing hardship and the Government had had to take a series of urgent measures to stabilize the country's economy, attract investment, restructure businesses, improve the taxation and banking systems and shore-up national production. Ukraine hoped that once it had overcome the financial and economic crisis, it would be in a position, in particular, to pay pensions and other social benefits regularly to beneficiaries and to increase the amounts. It should be pointed out, however, that the international community had not given Ukraine the support it had undertaken to provide to it and the other countries in transition under the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development. Ukraine therefore took the opportunity to ask for help in achieving greater integration into the global economy through the opening-up of international markets to its products, the removal of tariff barriers, the expansion of multilateral trade and a greater transparency and accountability on the part of the financial institutions.

46. The United Nations should redouble its efforts to promote social development and, to that end, strengthen the effectiveness of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, especially the Commission for Social Development.

47. **Ms. Otiti** (Uganda) said that all the issues covered by the agenda items under consideration had their roots in inequality of opportunity; the challenge of trying to establish a society of equals was becoming increasingly great. In particular, it was very difficult to meet the needs of the poorest people without endangering the stability of other population groups, particularly in the developing countries. Therefore, she was pleased with Member States' continued commitment to launch the global campaign for poverty eradication.

48. She reaffirmed her Government's political will to achieve its literacy goals for all with special emphasis on universal primary education, a goal which it hoped to attain in the not-too-distant future. The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative had enabled it to make further progress towards achieving its education goals.

49. She applauded the efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to make the international community aware of the need to expand education and mobilize additional resources to that end. She hoped that the global strategy developed by UNESCO for that purpose would yield successes that could be translated to the regional and national levels, thus ensuring the success of the United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty.

50. She also commended the report of the Secretary-General on Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (A/56/169 and Corr.1). The potential of disabled persons had long been ignored because of misconceptions about them. The fact that, according to the Secretary-General's report, persons with disabilities did not obtain prominent mention in the priority areas identified in the documents adopted at the special sessions and the Millennium Assembly attested amply to that problem. Many of the barriers faced by disabled persons were the result of a failure to attain most of the equity objectives, but it was clear that with better health services, many disabilities could be avoided in poor countries. Her delegation therefore looked forward to the outcome of the study of reasons for the exclusion of children with disabilities, which the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had had carried out by its Innocenti Research Centre. It also welcomed the support that specialized bodies and agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UNESCO provided for projects designed to enable communities to improve the lives of disabled persons.

51. Uganda had received financial assistance from the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability in order to implement a wheelchair project and a sign-language-training project, to assist the National Association of the Deaf and to develop a parent-training project.

52. Since ageing was inevitable, it was encouraging that the international community was moving towards the adoption of a plan of action on ageing. Her delegation commended the Government of Spain for its commitment to host the Second World Assembly on Ageing.

53. Most countries recognized the family as the basic unit of society. The family was currently experiencing a breakdown which, though not catastrophic, was nonetheless real. As a result, it was becoming increasingly difficult to meet the needs of older, disabled and young persons and to guarantee social development. Therefore, efforts to refocus attention on the family were especially welcome.

54. **Ms. Kristiansen** (Norway), speaking on agenda item 108, said that the United Nations system and Member States should help young people to combat injustice and poverty and to participate in the development of national and international policies. To that end, Member States should implement the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy, adopted at the fourth session of the World Youth Forum, held in Dakar in August 2001, and consider strengthening the United Nations Youth Unit to promote the influence on the United Nations of young people throughout the world. United Nations agencies should also improve their dialogue with non-governmental organizations.

55. For over 30 years, the Norwegian Government had included youth representatives in its delegation to the General Assembly; she encouraged other Member States to follow that practice, particularly as the involvement of young people in the preparation for world conferences and other important United Nations activities would inspire in them an interest in those events. It would also be very useful to prepare a special report on young people's opportunities to influence political decision-making.

56. No issue was more important to future generations than peace. Therefore, in order to avoid an escalation of violence and terror, as the events of 11 September 2001 had tragically illustrated, it was essential to invest in health, participation and, above all, education, which was perhaps the single most important factor in development. Thus, it was all the more significant that there were still 130 million children who had no access to primary education, which meant that the communities in which they were growing up were being denied the foundations for future development. She also drew attention to the fact that two thirds of the many children who were not in school were girls; no development strategy was better than one that involved women as central players.

57. **Mr. Fall** (Senegal) said, with reference to agenda item 108, that participants at the fourth session of the World Youth Forum, held in Dakar from 6 to 10 August 2001, had expressed their grave concern at the ever worsening situation of young people throughout the world, particularly in the developing countries, where they encountered numerous serious problems, including poverty, unemployment, epidemics, illiteracy and armed conflict. The participants had reiterated their concern about child labour, the trafficking in and sexual exploitation of children, young people in situations of armed conflict, and the exclusion suffered by young people affected by HIV/AIDS.

58. With regard to education and training, they had noted that, despite advances in basic education, the inequalities arising out of their social and economic conditions, sex or disability continued to prevent thousands of children and young people from receiving an education. To guarantee universal access to education in accordance with the framework for action adopted by the World Forum on Education, held in Dakar in April 2000, they had suggested the establishment of an education and information and communication technologies fund, an increase in education budgets and the implementation of education policies and programmes with a special focus on vulnerable and marginalized groups.

59. The Forum participants had also given careful consideration to the link between education and employment. In that context, they had supported the Secretary-General's initiative to establish a youth employment network and urged Governments to submit annual reports on the topic, together with plans of action for youth employment. They had also invited the United Nations to improve its methods of working with youth organizations, to increase youth representation on those of its bodies which dealt with young people, and to increase the scope and the resources of the Youth Unit in the Secretariat so that it could carry out its work more effectively.

60. Like the Forum participants, his delegation hoped that the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy adopted by the Forum would be considered and endorsed by the United Nations. It was, like the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, a consensus document and thus an important tool for decision makers, who would be enabled, as stated in the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Programme (A/56/180), to address the concerns of young people from a multidisciplinary perspective that allowed for integrated and cross-sectoral policy interventions and a comprehensive approach to youth issues.

61. Since assuming office in April 2000, the President of Senegal had put young people into positions of power, giving them important responsibilities. The practical outcome of the Government's commitment to tackling the problems of young people as a matter of urgency was the ever increasing participation of young people in the national work of reconstruction and development. One example was the "citizens' vacations" programme, which involved thousands of young people voluntarily helping with environmental protection and regeneration in villages throughout the country. In other words, despite limited resources and a host of structural constraints, Senegal was taking practical steps to ensure full participation at every level by young people and their organizations in the fields that most closely affected them.

62. **Ms. Hagon** (Australia) said, with reference to agenda item 108, that young people were key agents for social change, economic development and technological innovation, as emphasized by the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond. They should therefore be given greater opportunities to participate in the economic, social, political and cultural aspects of their societies and communities.

63. Her Government had launched a national youth policy, which gave priority to communication between the Government and young people, and introduced a national youth week, which highlighted the positive contribution of young people to society. Various other initiatives included youth media awards and a youth information web site, as well as various forums through which young people could communicate directly with the Government on issues affecting them. Youth-run non-governmental organizations also performed invaluable work.

64. Member States could promote youth participation at every level by including youth representatives in delegations to the General Assembly or other United Nations conferences. Her Government, which had adopted that practice, commended the approach to other countries.

65. The World Youth Forum provided a unique opportunity for young people from around the world to meet and exchange views. Her Government had therefore provided funding for youth representatives to attend the past two sessions. While the United Nations Youth Unit must retain primary responsibility for the Forum, it was essential that young people and youth organizations should participate in the planning and organizing of such a major international event. Local, regional and international initiatives that promoted the participation and empowerment of youth should also be developed.

66. Poverty, malnutrition, the HIV/AIDS problem and lack of access to health services and education directly affected not only the current but also future generations of young people. International efforts were vital to addressing such issues. Education constituted the most basic building block, being essential for development and a prerequisite for youth empowerment and participation. Violence, intolerance, armed conflict and hatred had a devastating effect on young people throughout the world, yet it was young people who held out the hope of a peaceful, secure and less violent future, if they received proper support. Member States should view young people not as a burden or as a challenge but as an invaluable resource.

67. **Mr. Mbanefo** (Nigeria) observed that an array of reports on social issues had been submitted to the Committee and required immediate attention. The extract from the Report on the World Social Situation 2001 (E/2001/104) highlighted the widening disparity in the income of developed and developing countries. Globalization, technological advances, especially the revolution in computer science, structural-adjustment programmes and liberalization policies had resulted in a deterioration in social services in the less advanced countries. The policies adopted by most developed countries to restore the equilibrium of international trade had done little to boost employment or promote sustained economic growth. Since the relationship between States and the market was complex, it was essential that decision makers heeded the particular circumstances of various countries at different stages of their history. Until the international community mustered the requisite political will, it would be impossible to attain the goal set at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, namely to halve poverty by 2015. United Nations reports on that subject were not exactly optimistic, nor were the forecasts of the United Nations Development Programme or the World Bank, which indicated that 70 countries, most of which were in Africa, would miss that target.

68. Since coming to power in 1999, the Nigerian Government had made poverty eradication its priority. To that end, it was drawing up a strategic document with the active support of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and it had implemented a five-year plan (2001-2005) designed to improve the economic situation, which had suffered from several military interventions over the past three decades. The National Poverty Eradication Council, chaired by President Obasanjo, was responsible for formulating and implementing policies chiefly aimed at reducing poverty by 2005. Transparency and economic good sense would be the watchwords when channelling resources towards that objective. Since Nigeria by itself could not supply all the necessary resources, it welcomed foreign investment in the agricultural and industrial sectors. Moreover, the international community would have to grant Nigeria a substantial reduction of its debt if the country were to complete successfully such fundamental social and economic reforms as the strengthening of institutions and the development of human resources.

69. Economic success was predicated on young people receiving an education that enabled them to find work and avoid the social ills caused by unemployment. The Universal Basic Education Programme made primary and junior-secondary schooling compulsory and free. The National Youth Service Corps encouraged youth participation in the implementation of national policies concerning them. Two banks founded by the Government lent young people start-up capital. The National Directorate of Employment helped them to acquire job skills, and young Nigerians who had received vocational training went to other developing countries under the Technical Aid Corps Programme.

70. As the Secretary-General had noted in his report "Support for volunteering" (A/56/288), volunteers played a vital role in preserving the stability and cohesion of societies and their economic contribution was significant. The Nigerian Government had recognized the need to involve volunteers in projects focusing on the eradication of poverty, but they could also play a big role in the campaign which had been launched at the instigation of the Nigerian President

against HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmissible diseases.

71. In implementing the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, the Government sought to ensure that all Nigerians were treated equally and, in keeping with the principles of the African Decade of Disabled Persons (2000-2009), designed to incorporate the question of disability in the social, economic and political agenda of all African States, it had adopted measures to secure access to training, rehabilitation services and employment for the whole population.

72. **Mr. Knyazhinskiy** (Russian Federation) said that recent events had shown the extent to which terrorism, organized crime, aggressive separatism, ethnic discord and the trafficking in drugs and weapons posed a threat to the world. So far only a few developed countries were able to enjoy the benefits of scientific and technical progress. That was why the Commission for Social Development had to monitor the way in which States honoured the commitments they had accepted in Copenhagen and Geneva, including their pledges of initiatives to step up international cooperation with countries in transition. The Commission's new multi-year programme of work 2002-2006 would make it possible, through a balanced approach which took account of the interests of all regional groups of States, to press on with the international drive to overcome the worst social evils outlined in the documents stemming from the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, documents which still defined the thrust of action plans and programmes which set out to give a social dimension to the market economy.

73. In recent years, the Russian Government had been devoting more and more money to the social field. For the first time in Russia's history the education budget had topped that of defence. The Government had also embarked on a complete reform of the social sector. Russia had established a medium-term socio-economic development programme which formed part of the socio-economic development strategy for the period up until 2010.

74. His delegation considered that in order to solve social problems it was necessary to adopt a policy of supporting the family. That was why the Russian Federation fully supported the efforts of the Commission for Social Development to intensify international cooperation to strengthen the family and its role in the education of children. The Russian Federation supported the initiative to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004 at national, regional and international levels, and considered that the report of the Secretary-General on the matter (E/CN.5/2001/4) could serve as a basis for its preparations.

75. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the Secretary-General, in his report on the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (A/56/180), emphasized the efforts of the Government of the Russian Federation to improve the situation of youth. The Russian Federation was ready to increase bilateral and multilateral cooperation with interested countries and international organizations in that field.

76. The Russian Federation supported the decisions taken at the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the Second World Assembly on Ageing concerning the agenda, programme of work and conditions for the participation of non-governmental organizations. The Russian Federation considered, however, that the work to draw up the Revised International Plan of Action on Ageing must be accelerated.

77. **Mr. Al-Sulaiti** (Qatar) said that economic growth would not be sufficient to eradicate poverty. The equitable distribution of wealth was just as important. In line with the objectives defined at the World Summit for Social Development, the United Nations accorded priority to development. The Commission for Social Development played an important role in that regard. However, particularly in the developing countries, the majority of peoples continued to live in conditions of poverty which were deteriorating all the time, unemployment was increasing while working conditions were worsening, the debt burden was increasingly onerous, raw material prices were too low, and there was a reduction in official development assistance and in the sums of money available for social investment. The international community should therefore endeavour to find the means of eradicating poverty, especially with the support of the United Nations specialized agencies and the developed countries. The latter should provide adequate economic resources, but should also reduce the debt of the poor countries and open their markets to the products of those countries.

78. Qatar was devoting sizeable resources to infrastructure development and vocational training, particularly for persons with special needs. It had taken measures to ensure equality between men and women and the integration of the latter into the development process. Qatar, which considered family stability a vehicle for social integration and harmony, had established a Supreme Council for Family Affairs, which had proposed various laws and adopted a development programme for women, children, older persons and those with special needs.

79. The International Year of Older Persons had furthered increased awareness of the demographic changes that were taking place both in the developed world and in the developing countries. The latter needed additional resources to meet the needs of older persons in terms of health, and to enable them to continue to play a productive role in society. The Second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held in Madrid in 2002, should enable global strategies to be drawn up. To achieve sustainable development, it was imperative to ensure the participation of all members of society, especially the young. Social development programmes had to be put in place, with the help of the private sector. That was why Qatar welcomed the efforts of the United Nations specialized agencies in the field of social growth.

80. **Mr. Khalid** (Pakistan), speaking on agenda item 27, said that his delegation fully associated itself with the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Social development was a principle enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and in 1995 some 117 heads of State and Government had re-committed themselves to that principle at the World Summit for Social Development, which had resulted in the adoption of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, whose main objectives were the eradication of poverty, the promotion of employment, the enhancement of social integration and capacity building. Five years later, at its twenty-fourth special session, the General Assembly had recognized that increased priority had been accorded to social development in national policies and at the international level, and a call for the mobilization of additional resources so that political will could translate into specific actions. But inequalities between countries persisted, poverty and social exclusion were getting worse, and HIV/AIDS and malaria had brought development virtually to a halt. A debt burden that was unsustainable, reverse financial flows, unequal terms of trade and unequal market access hampered the progress of the developing countries, especially those beset by armed conflicts. Pakistan itself had had to spend disproportionate sums on armaments because of the unresolved conflict affecting the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The international community, and the United Nations in particular, must redouble its efforts to find peaceful settlements to those conflicts. It would then be possible to invest in the social sector the enormous resources thereby released.

81. Although globalization offered a wealth of opportunities, its negative impact should be contained and its benefits equally distributed, as world leaders had acknowledged at the Millennium Summit. A partnership involving the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization, Governments, non-governmental organizations and relevant civil society actors was essential to achieving the vision of a just and equitable world. To that end, there must be synergy between commitments made at the national and international levels. Affluent countries must agree to alleviate the debt of poor countries, to offer them improved market access and to increase official development assistance.

82. Social development was a priority for the Government of Pakistan, which despite external and domestic constraints was continuing its march towards sustained growth, poverty alleviation and improved living conditions. For that purpose, it had decreased its expenditure on defence in favour of the social sector, initiated employment-generation programmes — particularly in low-income areas — micro-credit schemes to help small and medium-sized enterprises, and rural and urban development programmes, to complement the existing Social Action Programme, as well as a three-year literacy programme implemented in partnership with the private sector and public sector organizations, with emphasis on rural areas. Since August 2000, financial and development decision-making had been transferred to directly elected local administrations. It was noteworthy that 33 per cent of seats in those administrations were reserved for women. That first step towards revival of a true participatory democracy should promote poverty reduction and contribute to the country's sustainable development.

83. Furthermore, the terrorist attacks on the United States of 11 September and the resultant tensions in Pakistan and neighbouring countries had put a temporary hold on the country's progress towards prosperity. The Government — which had adopted an unambiguous stand against the global menace of terrorism — fully supported the efforts of the international community to address the issue and needed its assistance in dealing with the expected arrival in Pakistan of more than 1.5 million Afghan refugees, an influx that could lead to a massive humanitarian crisis.

84. **Mr. Howell** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that, despite recent shocks and current uncertainties, incomes were continuing to rise and innovations were flourishing in many parts of the world; elsewhere, however, economic inequality and exclusion were on the increase. The global economy must be capable of providing decent jobs and adequate and family-friendly working conditions to the majority. Moreover, market access should be identical for all countries, and discrimination in the workplace should be outlawed. Remunerated work represented the best means of escaping poverty. Concerned to reconcile the social and economic components of development, ILO had adopted a Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work in 1998. In November, pursuant to the request of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, ILO would be organizing a Global Employment Forum, to be held at Geneva, which would seek to place decent employment at the centre of economic and social policy, nationally and globally. ILO was working closely with the World Bank in national implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. ILO was also working towards the adoption of a new instrument to replace ILO Recommendation 127 on the Role of Cooperatives in the Economic and Social Development of Developing Countries.

85. ILO continued to initiate programmes that addressed each stage of the life cycle. ILO Convention 159 concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) called for equal treatment of disabled persons. Between 1999 and 2001, a further 10 countries had joined the 73 others which had ratified the Convention. The ILO Disability Programme was active in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the West Bank and Gaza, assisting with projects for young people with disabilities in seven African countries, in the framework of the African Decade of Disabled Persons. In 2000-2001, ILO had cooperated with the World Health Organization on a series of publications on mental health and the workplace.

86. In his report to the Millennium Assembly, the Secretary-General had called the attention of world leaders to youth unemployment and committed himself, together with the heads of the World Bank and ILO, to establish the Policy Network on Youth Unemployment in order to find solutions to the problem. The network had met in July 2001 and would submit recommendations to the General Assembly later in the year. In order to respect ILO Older Workers Recommendation, 1980 (No. 162), and in view of the conclusions of the World Employment Report 2001, measures were needed, in collaboration with employers' and workers' organizations, to ensure the maximum participation of older workers in economic life and society. The pressure on existing social security systems was a growing concern in all the countries where such systems existed. In many countries, and particularly developing countries, grandmothers had to care for their grandchildren, whose parents had died of HIV/AIDS but had no work, financial means or social protection. The Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work, adopted by ILO in 2001, sought to provide guidance for developing national policy and programmes. Lastly, ILO was active in the preparatory process for the Second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held in 2002, and the revision of the International Plan of Action on Ageing.

87. **Mr. Leete** (United Nations Population Fund), speaking on agenda item 109, said that with the extension of life expectancy — one of mankind's greatest achievements — population ageing had become a phenomenon of major significance for all societies. While older persons had attracted a great deal of supportive concern in the more developed countries, the rapidly-changing population structure in developing countries had aroused little attention, although 350 million persons aged 60 and over lived in those countries, compared with 225 million in more developed regions. Those totals would only increase in the decades ahead.

88. It was therefore necessary to adopt policies capable of responding to people's needs and expectations, particularly to promote lifelong education, training and health care; to recognize the

services provided by older persons, particularly women, in raising their grandchildren, orphaned by HIV/AIDS — a problem that was especially acute throughout much of sub-Saharan Africa; to eliminate violence and other crimes against older persons and the inter-generational violence arising from poverty; to strengthen support systems to ensure the material well-being of older persons; and to ensure that they received the necessary social services and welfare protection. Governments should create a favourable climate and non-governmental organizations, communities and the private sector should facilitate positive action; policy dialogue could bring different stakeholders together and provide a basis for action.

89. The development goals established at the Millennium Summit, disaggregated by age and sex, provided clear guidelines to follow in order to meet the basic needs of older persons.

90. The strategy on population ageing formulated by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) was guided by the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the recommendations endorsed by the General Assembly at the time of the review conducted five years after the Conference. That review had led to a further series of recommendations focused on fostering inter-generational dialogue and solidarity, the development of strategies and the need to document positive experiences of policies and programmes in the area of ageing.

91. The Fund continued to be actively involved in the preparatory activities for the Second World Assembly on Ageing and would be convening an international expert group meeting on population ageing and development, in collaboration with the Programme on Ageing of the Division for Social Policy and Development, in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and two non-governmental organizations, the American Association of Retired Persons and HelpAge International.

92. In conclusion, UNFPA wished to commend the efforts of the Division for Social Policy and Development, which was the secretariat for the Second World Assembly on Ageing, and its role in the preparation of the draft international strategy of action on ageing 2002.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.

United Nations A/C.3/56/SR.5

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Chairman: Mr. Al-Hinai ..... (Oman)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 27: Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (*continued*) (A/56/140)

Agenda item 108: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (*continued*) (A/56/3, A/56/57-E/2001/5, A/56/73-E/2001/68 and Add.1, A/56/114-E/2001/93 and Add.1, A/56/169, A/56/180, A/56/288, E/2001/104, A/C.3/56/L.2 and L.3)

Agenda item 109: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing (*continued*) (A/56/152)

1. **Ms. Elafi** (Netherlands), speaking as the youth representative in her delegation, said that both the United Nations and young people could benefit from a close working relationship through meaningful youth participation. Youth from all over the world had gathered recently in Dakar, Senegal, for the fourth session of the World Youth Forum of the United Nations system, which had adopted the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy. That document identified new opportunities for youth empowerment and recommendations for fighting the threats they faced, including unemployment, environmental degradation, diseases like HIV/AIDS, poverty, armed conflict, illiteracy, intolerance and discrimination. The future of the World Youth Forum had also been discussed. Her Government was eager to enhance the value of such gatherings, which provided an opportunity for youth from all over the world to interact and learn from other nations. They also provided a framework for a collective international voice of youth. One of the most important purposes of the Forum was to look beyond regional problems to global issues, in an attempt to narrow the gaps between regions. In order to increase the effectiveness of the World Youth Forum, in the future it should be based on a transparent structure and a broad representative process.

2. In order for the Dakar recommendations to be implemented, young people needed assistance from Governments and United Nations agencies. Governments should make a commitment to include youth in their official delegations to the General Assembly and other international meetings. The United Nations system must be accessible to young people, especially those from developing countries. States should be encouraged to provide sufficient funding for youth activities by contributing to the United Nations Youth Fund.

3. Lastly, referring to the impact of the 11 September attacks, she recalled that 2001 had been proclaimed the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations. She commended those Governments which had made it their aim to encourage intercultural dialogue and openly embrace cultural diversity and pluralism. That would help fight intolerance of the kind experienced the world over in recent weeks in the form of a backlash against, for example, Arabs and Muslims. It was terrifying that some people were unable to identify the recent attacks on the United States for what they were: acts of terror by extremists who did not represent true Islam or the Arab people. It had been heartening to her personally, as a Dutch Moroccan, to see many leading politicians in her own country and elsewhere take a clear stand against such a backlash.

4. Tolerance and understanding could be stimulated through intercultural learning and the international involvement of young people in particular. They could help eradicate misconceptions and create a society in which diversity was valued. The international community must commit itself to ensuring that the battle against terrorism did not widen the gap among people of different countries, nationalities and religions, as well as between majorities and minorities within individual countries.

5. **Mr. Maquieira** (Chile) said that, according to World Health Organization (WHO) estimates, between 7.5 and 10 per cent of the population of developing countries suffered from some degree of disability. For Chile, that amounted to nearly 1.4 million people; equal rights and opportunities for persons with disabilities were therefore priorities for his Government. Over the past decade, Chile had changed its approach to dealing with disabled persons, shifting from a State which provided assistance in the form of health benefits and social security but left the task of integration to the private sector to a State which made resources directly available for promoting the social, workplace and educational integration of such persons. Thus conceived, social inclusion benefited the entire community.

6. Steps had also been taken to promote a change in cultural attitudes towards persons with disabilities, both in the media and among educators, opinion-makers, political leaders and others. In the legislative area, a 1994 act had established norms for the full social integration of disabled persons and their access to education, transportation and telecommunications. Civil society had played a very important role in all such initiatives, in an effort to build a more equitable and humane society.

7. The World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance had adopted a Declaration and Plan of Action in which the General Assembly was invited to consider the drafting of an international convention to protect the rights and dignity of disabled persons and eliminate discrimination against them. His delegation believed that the Commission for Social Development should begin to consider the possibility of drafting such a convention in order to report thereon to the next session of the General Assembly.

8. **Mr. Barg** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that Libya's experience in the field of human development in generally, and social development in particular, was unique inasmuch as decisions on development were taken collectively with the participation of all segments of society. Political decision-making in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was based on direct popular rule as exercised through the People's Congresses, which were the decision-making bodies, and the People's Committees, which were the executive bodies. In that framework, the project for the advancement of all segments of society was based on the achievement of self-reliance and economic and social justice and the rejection of exclusion and marginalization, so as to ensure the well-being of the individual and the community. Social justice also involved ensuring the optimal distribution of income and wealth and balancing the needs of present and future generations.

9. His country believed that human beings were both the pivot and the purpose of social development. Investment in people brought about social development designed to improve human life and well-being through the optimal use of resources for the benefit of all segments of society without discrimination. Over the past three decades, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had achieved great success in preparing a suitable environment for the various areas of social development and had given it absolute priority in successive budgets and development plans, particularly with regard to education, health and vocational training infrastructures.

10. Life expectancy at birth had increased considerably in his country as a result of the progress made in the development of health and nutrition infrastructures. Great advances had also been made in education: 67 per cent of women and 87 per cent of men were now literate. The overall literacy rate was 77.5 per cent, as against 39 per cent in 1973. Libyan women had made great advances: 75 per cent of Libyan girls were enrolled in preparatory and secondary schools, as compared with 79 per cent of boys. The education sector had been given high priority in successive development plans and programmes since 1969 and had accounted for 17 per cent of the general budget during the 1990s.

11. In the housing sector, homeownership had been promoted and an end had been put to the rental system that had prevailed before the revolution. The phenomenon of marginal housing and slum agglomerations in rural and urban areas, which had accounted for 45 per cent of housing in Libya before the revolution, had also been eliminated.

12. One of the most important transformations had been the reduction of the income gap among social groups and between urban and rural areas. Despite the negative impact of international economic circumstances, the fall in oil prices in the 1970s and 1980s and the various embargoes imposed on the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, implementation of the State's economic and social policies based on eliminating the disparities among regions and families had nevertheless remained a priority. Average per capita income had increased to 8.2 times the average in the 1970s at the beginning of the revolutionary era.

13. Since the 1969 revolution, the State had created an effective social system aimed at protecting citizens and ensuring their security in the event of sickness, old age or disaster and at providing social welfare to children and to disabled and older persons with no one to support them. Such persons enjoyed material benefits that enhanced their role in society and afforded them equal opportunities to obtain a livelihood. Under that social umbrella, the State also provided basic pensions for widows and divorced and needy women, particularly older women.

14. His delegation stressed the need to maintain the momentum generated by the celebration of the International Year of Older Persons, which constituted a step towards raising awareness of the needs and contributions of that age group, to which Arab and Islamic religious and moral values accorded great status and esteem because of its important role in ensuring continuity between generations. His country's concern went beyond providing the necessary care for that group to ensuring their involvement in social, economic and political development projects. Such involvement should preserve them from one of two extremes, namely, acute dependency or distressful social exclusion. The family, in its traditional form, was a fundamental and supportive factor in that regard. In that connection, he expressed appreciation to the Government of Spain for offering to host the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002.

15. His country accorded similar attention to developing the skills of young people by enabling them to exercise their right to education, work and welfare, thereby promoting their social, political, economic and environmental participation in their communities.

16. The Copenhagen Declaration and the outcome document of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly had called for the creation of an appropriate economic, political and social climate that would enable peoples to achieve social development. Although many developing States had assumed responsibility for the achievement of social development at the national level and had made great efforts to fulfil their commitments in that regard, those countries had not been afforded appropriate conditions for meeting the challenges of achieving the goals set forth in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. The agreed target for Official Development Assistance had not been met and the burdens of debt and debt-servicing were impeding the economic and social development efforts of developing countries.

17. While full and effective implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action was basically a national responsibility, it could not be achieved without the full commitment of the international community. At the current session, the international community must reaffirm its commitment to promote efforts to combat factors that posed grave threats to international peace and security and must renew its undertaking to eradicate malnutrition, hunger, disease, drug abuse, foreign occupation and international terrorism, including State terrorism. It must take effective action to eradicate diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDS and practical steps to cancel the external debt. There should be a universal resolve to reform the international financial institutions to make them more democratic and their decision-making more transparent. It was also necessary to eliminate the negative economic and social consequences of globalization, particularly the marginalization of the role of developing countries in the global economy.

18. The *2001 Report on the World Social Situation* showed that the economic and social situation in Africa remained grave and that despite the efforts made by the African States to fulfil their national and international commitments, the international community must make a serious commitment to promoting African peace-making mechanisms and to helping the continent solve its economic and health problems by revising the unfair conditions imposed by international and private financial institutions, offering fair prices for their exports of raw materials, eliminating the barriers faced by their exports on global markets and formulating decisive, comprehensive measures to deal with the debt problem.

19. He hoped that the United Nations would continue to discharge its responsibilities, particularly its responsibility to protect the right of future generations to a better world. In that connection, his delegation associated itself with the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China at the Committee's 3rd meeting.

20. **Archbishop Martino** (Observer for the Holy See) said that the Holy See would continue to defend the family as the basic unit of society. Currently, in the face of conflict, poverty, demographic change and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, it was necessary to realize the important function of the family in holding society together.

21. Although the sad events of 11 September 2001 had caused the General Assembly to postpone its special session on children, the promotion and protection of the rights of children continued to demand attention. Indeed, the Charter of the United Nations affirmed the determination to create a better world for future generations.

22. The Holy See also looked forward to participating in the discussions on the forthcoming Second World Assembly on Ageing. It was regrettable that, just as the

world began to make great advances in prolonging life, reverence and respect for life had been lost. It seemed impossible to believe that the taking of life had become an acceptable alternative in some places. For many older persons, changes in legislation or medical practice had become a new source of anxiety and could weaken the relationship of unconditional trust which they had a right to place in those whose mission it was to care for them. Persons with disabilities were also unique individuals with equal and inviolable dignity. Governments and civil society must work to provide them with living conditions and opportunities such that their dignity was recognized and protected.

23. The valuable documents before the Committee were a reminder of the responsibility of each Government and society to provide for the needs of all people, especially the most vulnerable. As the United Nations began to turn its attention to the upcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development, it should remember the first principle of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the need to recognize the human person as the centre of all its concerns.

24. **Mr. Al Naqbi** (United Arab Emirates) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. He noted with regret that despite all the collective commitments made by heads of State and Government at the various international conferences held over the past decade and in the Millennium Declaration particularly with regard to social development and poverty eradication, national, regional and international challenges to the fulfilment of those commitments, such as armed and civil racial conflicts, genocide, enforced displacement, the proliferation of drugs, organized crime and terrorism against innocent persons were increasing in an unprecedented manner. His delegation deplored the current state of humankind and the fear, tension and instability generated by the recent grievous terrorist operations against the United States and other countries, which had caused death, injury or loss of income for thousands of innocent people.

25. A worldwide campaign of solidarity was needed to meet all those growing challenges with a view to strengthening international cooperation and transparency based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and of international law, namely, equality among States, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, the right of peoples to self-defence, to self-determination and to oppose foreign occupation, and respect for cultural diversity and diversity of beliefs. His delegation called for the strengthening of regional and international mechanisms designed to contain conflicts and their destructive consequences, curb the factors that led to their outbreak and prosecute those responsible for acts involving human rights violations, terrorism, trafficking of drugs and prohibited weapons, organized crime and money-laundering, among others. That would help mobilize human, financial, development and environmental efforts and resources for the social development and well-being of peoples, instead of squandering them needlessly.

26. He reaffirmed his country's full support for the recommendations contained in the outcome documents of the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, which had enhanced the international community's awareness of the nature of the social and developmental problems facing the world's peoples, particularly in developing and least developed countries. It was very important that States, particularly the developed countries and donors, should fulfil their commitments to implement those recommendations. Official and unofficial assistance to developing countries must be increased, their debt burden must be alleviated and the conditions governing their access to technology for peaceful uses and the access of their products to global markets must be eased to enable those countries to carry out appropriate reforms of their social and development institutions, diversify their sources of national income, create job opportunities for their nationals, provide education, health and social welfare services and combat chronic and epidemic diseases, especially HIV/AIDS. That would help reduce the gap between developed and developing countries and bridge the social, economic and technological divide.

27. On instructions from His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, to make the individual in that State the pivot and the purpose of national development endeavours, the State had adopted legislation, policies and plans aimed at developing national human resources through the development and modernization of educational, health and cultural institutions and the establishment of centres to train young people and develop their

scientific and technological skills in accordance with national development needs. It had been active in the establishment of homes and centres for the welfare of families, children and older and disabled persons, in the provision of health and social insurance services for nationals and in the creation of diversified employment opportunities for them, in addition to making efforts to advance the status of women and promote their equality with men in all areas of education and employment in a way that accorded with Arab custom and Islamic beliefs.

28. The United Arab Emirates had also been involved in bilateral and regional cooperation activities in the area of human development and cultural diversity. It had contributed to the building of schools, hospitals, orphanages and places of worship, extended soft loans to many developing countries and hosted numerous conferences, symposia and training courses on social, environmental, population and other development issues.

29. He hoped that the Committee's discussions at the current session would help to promote the role of the United Nations in designing and coordinating development policies and programmes in developing countries and to revitalize an approach to international development and social cooperation that was based on equality among peoples and the right of States to choose their own development course and achieve a better future for their societies in accordance with their independent national policies and interests.

30. **Mr. Kim Chang Guk** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), noting that social development was a priority concern of the United Nations system, said that the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) had made considerable efforts to promote such development at the regional level. Despite such endeavours, however, the world social situation had worsened and new challenges had arisen.

31. Globalization had exacerbated the inequities of the international economic order, plunging the vulnerable economies of developing countries into catastrophe. Conflicts and unilateral sanctions also impeded the sustained development of those countries and often encroached on their national sovereignty.

32. Sustainable economic development was a prerequisite for social development. Accordingly, in order to achieve the objectives spelled out by the World Summit for Social Development, priority should be given to addressing the challenges to economic development. First of all, an equitable international economic order should be established which did not blindly impose globalization on developing countries but instead included an equitable trading system, reform of the international financial institutions and a solution to the external debt problem. Secondly, unilateral economic sanctions should be ended and solutions sought to conflicts. Lastly, the role of the United Nations system in finding solutions to social development problems should be enhanced.

33. In his country, the socialist system and the Government's people-centred policies had enabled the issue of social development to be addressed successfully. Political and economic isolation and a series of natural disasters had forced the country into temporary economic difficulties in the 1990s, but the Government was modernizing the economy and carrying out large-scale infrastructure projects to help promote economic self-sufficiency and solve the food problem. His Government would contribute to the international community's social development efforts while safeguarding its national sovereignty and working towards national prosperity.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.

United Nations A/C.3/56/SR.6

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Chairman: Mr. Al-Hinai ..... (Oman)

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* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 27: Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (*continued*) (A/56/140)

Agenda item 108: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (*continued*) (A/56/3, A/56/57-E/2001/5, A/56/73-E/2001/68 and Add.1, A/56/114-E/2001/93 and Add.1, A/56/169, A/56/180 and A/56/288; E/2001/104; A/C.3/56/L.2 and L.3)

Agenda item 109: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing (*continued*) (A/56/152)

1. **Mr. Martins** (Angola) associated himself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Botswana on behalf of the Southern Africa Development Community. He took note of the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (A/56/140), and welcomed the programme of work of the Commission for Social Development for the period 2002-2006, which he hoped would prove to be effective.

2. Since the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, social development priorities had shifted because it had become clear that, in order to make society more just and improve living conditions, it was vital to build on the potential of individuals, which meant promoting education, health and social cohesion. For that reason, social development was now linked to new elements such as greater community involvement and the creation of partnerships. There nonetheless remained a wide gap between experience gained in social development and the limited ability of some countries to engage in innovative development in that area. Angola thanked the countries that had fulfilled their commitment to help fund social development. It also congratulated all United Nations agencies concerned with social development on the quality of their reports and recommendations.

3. Because of the internal conflict that had ravaged Angola for more than three decades, the country's human development indicators remained very low, as the *Human Development Report* showed. It was unacceptable and tragic that the Angolan population still lacked access to basic social services. To remedy that deplorable situation, the Angolan Government had in 1999 launched a new humanitarian emergency programme and had begun to implement a poverty reduction strategy, with the support of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the European Union.

4. Moreover, in order to promote its social development, it had established partnerships with civil society organizations and the private sector. In particular, it had made arrangements with oil companies for those companies to set aside a share of their profits for community projects. As a result, the private sector was more involved in social development. In addition, as the Government moved the management of its social development activities closer to community level, those communities were ever more frequently involved.

5. The Angolan Government was convinced that education and health were vital to economic and social development. Health services in particular helped to reduce the incidence of disease and thereby helped individuals to work productively. Despite the conflict, Angola remained determined to further its social development, in accordance with the commitment it had entered into at the World Summit for Social Development and the special session of the General Assembly on social development.

6. While it was vital for the United Nations to redouble its efforts to promote social development and eradicate poverty, it must also focus on promoting peace, which was a prerequisite for social development.

7. **Ms. Joseph** (Saint Lucia), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that despite the tragic events of 11 September 2001, the international community should not forget the need to address numerous economic and social inequities. The International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Monterrey in March 2002, would be a positive event in that regard, giving the international community an important opportunity to address the numerous issues effecting social development in the context of globalization. CARICOM saw the Conference as a useful means to

seek new solutions to correct social and economic imbalances caused by varying levels of development and of vulnerability.

8. One of the major issues affecting social development was that of migration, which presented considerable challenges at the national and regional levels. According to the findings of various expert groups, migration was a sensitive indicator of the economic situations in individual countries, while current research on the world socio-economic situation did not attribute sufficient weight to migration. CARICOM had progressed significantly in addressing migration issues. A regional mechanism for the free movement of university graduates and skilled workers was being set up, with 10 member States currently completing the legal process to permit the free movement of graduates, while three States had taken all the necessary steps to facilitate free movement by other categories of workers.

9. The World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, adopted by the General Assembly in 1995, was designed to address more effectively the problems of young people and to increase their opportunities for participation in society. CARICOM reiterated its support for the Programme, which contained recommendations in 10 priority areas: education, employment, hunger, poverty, the environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure activities, girls and young women, and full and effective participation by youth in the life of society and in decision-making.

10. One of the most dynamic initiatives taken by the international community in favour of youth had been the convening of sessions of the World Youth Forum, the most recent of which had been held in Dakar in August 2001. CARICOM supported the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy, which had been adopted at that session, particularly in respect of the serious health issues affecting young people, especially HIV/AIDS, and also associated itself with the call for the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, adopted by the General Assembly at its special session in June 2001. The CARICOM States had recently entered into a new pan-Caribbean partnership against HIV/AIDS designed to reduce the number of infections, provide care and support for those affected by the virus or the disease, and protect them from discrimination.

11. Through their Ministerial Council on Human and Social Development, which coordinated activities in the vital areas of health, youth, sports, gender and culture, the CARICOM States had developed a number of regional initiatives relating to youth. In 1998, they had brought together young people from 22 Caribbean countries for a conference in Barbados and the Bahamas, at which a range of health, governance and social development issues had been addressed. That had been followed in 2000 by a successor event held in Grenada. In May 2001, CARICOM had convened the second meeting of officials responsible for youth issues, in which regional and international agencies, education institutions and youth organizations had also taken part. The participants in the meeting had identified the need for a regional youth database to assist in policy formation and the development of career structures, and to elaborate a method for youth participation in decision-making. Various modalities had also been recommended for addressing youth poverty and adolescent health.

12. Older persons made up a steadily growing segment of the population in the Caribbean as in many countries of the world. According to a report by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, persons over 60 years of age would make up 10.6 per cent of the population in 2005, compared with 6.9 per cent in 1950; those over 75 were predicted to make up 28 per cent of the elderly population by 2005, compared with 19.2 per cent in 1950. The same report also emphasized problems relating to physical safety and income security for older persons, planning for ageing, inter-generational relationships, and the financial constraints faced by Governments in their efforts to ensure that older persons were not marginalized. In view of those changes, the Caribbean countries had embarked on a number of activities, particularly in relation to helping older persons to remain productive by means of work in microenterprises, the transmission of certain cultural values in educational institutions, and the provision of mediation and advisory services.

13. With the full effects of ageing not expected in the Caribbean until at least 2030 according to some studies, the region had adequate time to deal with the related issues through innovative strategies, such as the programme in Trinidad and Tobago, which provided for public awareness and training activities, increased economic assistance to the elderly, and a national

survey of the living conditions of older persons. The Caribbean States had in fact already begun to implement such strategies. As of 1999, St. Lucia had begun a programme of construction and renovation of homes for the elderly and persons with disabilities.

14. According to some estimates, there were over 500 million disabled persons in the world, or 10 per cent of the global population, and two thirds of them lived in developing countries. In the light of their current situation, there was a need to continue strengthening the initiatives already undertaken to facilitate their full integration in the mainstream of society.

15. CARICOM noted with satisfaction the special focus of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on the needs of children who were disabled as a result of armed conflicts, and it wished to acknowledge with appreciation once again the workshop on the rights of children with disabilities conducted by UNICEF during the World Summit for Social Development.

16. The emergence of a globalized economy was likely to create further challenges for disabled persons, particularly with regard to access to new technologies through computer literacy. CARICOM, which stood ready to contribute to the implementation of the commitment to create a society for all, including disabled persons, had established national councils charged with analysing those challenges. In the meantime, progress had already been achieved on the ground. In Saint Lucia, a disabled-friendly school had recently been opened with the generous support of the Governments of France and Germany and resources from the national poverty reduction fund. Similarly, in Grenada and Jamaica, financial institutions were granting revolving credit to disabled persons. In Guyana and Dominica, projects in agriculture and the craft industry had also been implemented. Much remained to be done, however, in order fully to integrate disabled persons into society.

17. CARICOM acknowledged the importance of the many international initiatives taken to strengthen the family, notably the observance of the International Year of the Family in 1994. It supported the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Year at plenary meetings of the General Assembly in 2003 and 2004, which would allow the trends affecting families, both positive and negative, to be studied and the commitments made in respect of families to be reaffirmed.

18. CARICOM agreed with the Secretary-General that major demographic, economic, cultural and social changes had affected both the family as an institution and family members as individuals, and it wished to reiterate its appreciation for the efforts of the Family Unit of the Division for Social Policy and Development to assist Governments in developing, implementing and evaluating family-related policies and programmes within the framework of the follow-up to the International Year of the Family.

19. CARICOM looked forward to working with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on the formulation of programmes to assist the Caribbean in addressing some of the most difficult problems affecting families, particularly unemployment, poverty and drug abuse.

20. It also looked forward to the forthcoming international workshop on social and development policies to be held in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

21. **Mr. Ahsan** (Bangladesh), speaking on agenda item 108, said that his delegation fully associated itself with the statement made by the Chairman of the Group of 77 on 8 October.

22. Given the uncertainty looming over the global economy as a result of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on 11 September, the Committee should focus firmly, in its deliberations, on how to continue advancing social development in the new environment.

23. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the Commission for Social Development had finalized its multi-year programme of work. The core theme for 2002, namely integration of social and economic policy, was particularly timely given the need for States to minimize the human cost of macroeconomic policies and globalization. That assumed that it was necessary to continue helping States to provide social protection, particularly for vulnerable groups; forging international partnerships to assist developing countries, particularly the least developed countries; investing in the social sector; and taking steps to reduce the negative social and economic impact of turbulence in the international financial markets. Since the sharing of best practices in social development was a good means of achieving progress in that area, his

delegation hoped that the Commission would endeavour to raise awareness of such practices.

24. The Report on the World Social Situation, 2001, did not present an encouraging picture. The income disparity between developed and developing countries was continuing to widen; trade liberalization had not brought the dividends that would have enabled developing countries to invest more in the social sector; and there could be no real progress in reducing poverty without the galvanization of the political will of Governments. The least developed countries required special care, since they would be particularly vulnerable if the global situation deteriorated further. A programme of action for those countries had been adopted in May 2001 in Brussels. The programme, the targets and goals of which reflected those of the United Nations in that area, called on the least developed countries to increase budgetary allocations for social infrastructure and basic social services, create a favourable environment for enhancing social sector investment, train social service providers, encourage the establishment of public-private partnerships and improve housing and public health-care facilities. It also called on them to take steps to empower people living in poverty, particularly women, and enhance their access to basic social services.

25. The least developed countries were committed to taking those measures under the Brussels Programme of Action, but their efforts would be futile if their development partners, including the international financial institutions and the developed countries, failed to fulfil their part of the undertakings, namely increasing official development assistance in support of the efforts by the least developed countries. Those countries needed financial and other assistance to develop effective safety nets and swift response mechanisms to cope with natural disasters and socio-economic shocks, including those resulting from economic reforms and fiscal adjustments. They also required support to improve their education and health facilities and national statistical systems, and, more generally, to mitigate social exclusion, insecurity and vulnerability.

26. **Ms. Kok Li Peng** (Singapore), speaking on agenda item 109, said that in the report on the World Ageing Situation, 2002, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs pointed out that life expectancy at birth had increased globally by about 20 years since 1950, to its current level of 66 years and that longevity was a reality shared by both developed and developing countries. At the same time, there was an increase in the number of elderly persons. The efforts of the United Nations to focus attention on that issue were timely. Attitudes towards the elderly were changing and she applauded that change because elderly persons played an important role. Most cultures traditionally recognized the wisdom of the elderly and their stabilizing effect for communities. In relatively recent times, however, their role had been diminished in favour of a youth culture.

27. The world population was undergoing a revolution in terms of longevity. Her delegation welcomed the continued efforts by the Organization in that area and supported the preparations for the Second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held in Madrid in 2002.

28. Singapore had taken a number of initiatives with regard to health care for the elderly. By the year 2030, the proportion of Singaporeans aged 65 and above would triple. The Ministry of Health had estimated that the latter would comprise 20 per cent of the patients in hospitals, and an inter-ministerial committee on health care for the elderly had been formed in 1997 to review the health-care needs of the elderly and identify measures to ensure that those needs would continue to be met. Its recommendations had been supplemented by those of the inter-ministerial committee on the ageing population, established in 1998. The work of those two committees had made it possible to define a number of principles: care for the elderly should emphasize health promotion and disease prevention; institutionalization should be a measure of last resort; the individual and his family should take primary responsibility for the care of the elderly; since health care for older persons tended to be long term, it should be affordable; the Government was responsible for support and preventive activities, as well as providing care in cases of acute illness, setting policy guidelines and plans, and developing and regulating services; long-term care should be the preserve of non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Health care for the elderly was provided through a spectrum comprising short-term care and long-term care. In order to keep health care for the elderly affordable, financing was based on the principles of individual responsibility, community assistance and government funding.

29. In anticipation of the growing need for long-term care, Singapore was considering the development of a comprehensive financing scheme to help individuals pay for such care. In addition, the ministries responsible regularly monitored demographic trends and changes in the care needs of the elderly and reviewed measures already in place to provide a continuum of cost-effective and quality care for the elderly.

30. For the longevity revolution to be fully exploited, there had to be a parallel emphasis on providing adequate and affordable health care to the ageing, who constituted an essential social resource.

31. **Mr. Widodo** (Indonesia) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Despite a decade of unprecedented global economic growth, world income inequality had increased. Globalization and economic crises had compounded the problems of poverty and unemployment and had hobbled the efforts of many developing countries to carry out the commitments made during the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly. The fourth meeting of ASEAN ministers responsible for social welfare, held in Singapore in August 2001, nevertheless, gave rise to optimism. That meeting had underscored the Association's determination to realize the vision of a community of caring societies by 2020.

32. Indonesia believed that it was the primary responsibility of nations to do everything possible to ensure social development, a responsibility that his country had carried out in spite of months of unrest and political conflict, but it was also true that many of the obstacles to social development must be addressed at the international level. Social development objectives included not only improving health care or promoting equality in the field of development. Strengthening the role of each individual within society and the stability of society itself, as well as measures to combat racism, intolerance and terrorism were also important. Concerted action must be taken in order to make the planet a safer place, reduce unemployment and enhance social welfare. In that regard, there was a need to take into account the demographic changes occurring throughout the world. The increase in the number of older persons, which would be discussed at the Second World Assembly on Ageing posed a challenge, as stated in the Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific. His country's policies were designed to respond in a proportional manner in order to ease the demographic transition between the generations and maintain family unity. Of no less concern to Indonesia was the situation of the nation's youth and the juvenilization of poverty, as a result of globalization and the economic crisis. In that regard, the World Programme of Action for Youth for the Year 2000 and Beyond was as relevant as ever. Since the young people in Indonesia had played an important role in overcoming the recent constitutional and political challenges, Indonesia sought to redouble its efforts in the field of education, renewing its commitment to literacy for all, as recommended by the draft proposal and plan of action for the United Nations Decade for Literacy. Other vulnerable groups in society, including the disabled, 80 per cent of whom lived in developing countries, should not be neglected. Although the Asian Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, was coming to an end, Indonesia remained committed, in spite of its economic limitations, to building a society, in which all people could contribute their talents to national development.

31. **Ms. Kang** Kyung-wha (Republic of Korea), speaking under agenda item 109, said that recent advances in science and technology had brought about a rapid expansion of the global economy, but also an ageing of the global population as a result of the increase in life expectancy. The challenge could not be met in isolation from such concerns as social integration, poverty eradication, economic stability, sustainable development and gender equality. Indeed, the declining productivity of society and increasing burden on the productive population led to greater government spending on social security and welfare programmes for the elderly. As far back as 1982, the International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted at the First World Assembly on Ageing, which had been held in Vienna, had provided recommendations for the elaboration of national strategies. The International Year of Older Persons, 1999 had drawn participants from numerous governments and non-governmental organizations for the movement "Towards a society for all ages".

34. She hoped that the Second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held in Spain in 2002, would lead to the adoption of a revised International Plan of Action on Ageing that was attuned to the demographic, socio-

economic and technological changes of the previous two decades. In many traditional societies, the extended family provided protection for the elderly and the most vulnerable members of society. However, the pace and demands of modern life were such that the concept of the extended family and the moral codes that dictated respect and care for the elderly were becoming increasingly untenable. The elderly were being stripped of their traditional roles, without being assigned a new place in society. The consequences of the phenomenon had been even more pronounced in countries struggling with limited resources against economic difficulties. As it recovered from its economic crisis, the Republic of Korea was expanding opportunities for employment of the elderly, particularly within their own communities.

35. **Ms. Maw Maw** (Myanmar) said that her delegation aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. By adopting at the 1995 World Summit for Social Development the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action on Social Development, participants had committed themselves to eradicating poverty, expanding productive employment, reducing unemployment, enhancing social integration and creating an enabling environment for social development. The outcomes since then had varied from country to country.

36. The focal point for social development in Myanmar was the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, supported by the National Committee on Social Development, which had been established prior to the World Summit. Cooperatives, which had existed in Myanmar for over 50 years, but had adapted to the demands of the market economy, contributed to the achievement of the goals set out in the Programme of Action. The key to economic and social development was education and that was why Myanmar, with assistance from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), was currently implementing a plan to ensure that 80 per cent of all children finished primary school. Efforts must also be made, however, to respond to the needs of the elderly, especially those living alone. The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement coordinated activities in that field, in collaboration with various non-governmental organizations.

37. While Myanmar acknowledged that social development was first and foremost a national responsibility, the international community as a whole had a responsibility to assist.

38. **Mr. Manalo** (Philippines), speaking under agenda item 108, said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Philippines welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (A/56/169), as well as the adoption by Member States of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, which placed emphasis on accessibility, health care and social services, employment and sustainable means of livelihood.

39. In 2000, the Philippines had strengthened its law governing accessibility by directing Government agencies to provide structural features for persons with disabilities in State universities so as to facilitate their access to higher education and thereby hasten their integration into the mainstream of Philippine society. The President had also appointed a sectoral representative on the National Anti-Poverty Commission. In partnership with the Government and non-governmental organizations, the National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons had established programmes to improve the skills and living conditions of disabled persons, but also to encourage them to seek gainful employment. The integration of persons with disabilities into the economic mainstream, a task facilitated by information technology and in particular the Internet, was one way to reduce poverty. That could be seen in the Asia and Pacific region, where disabled women and girls were the marginalized group that was most at risk to living in poverty. While it was true that since the end of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992) progress had been made in combating discrimination against disabled persons, much more remained to be done. The forthcoming review of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons should provide insights on the areas in which progress still needed to be made, such as increased accessibility and promotion of the independence, self-fulfilment and dignity of disabled persons. In today's world, one out of every 10 persons suffered from some disability. The international community should therefore increase the effectiveness of their advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities and better sensitize the public to their specific

problems. For its part, the Philippines would be submitting a draft resolution, entitled "Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: towards a society for all in the twenty-first century".

40. **Mr. Enkhtsetseg** (Mongolia) said that his delegation supported the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. He noted that, while globalization brought greater opportunities, it heightened the vulnerability and insecurity of some of the weakest and poorest nations. Social exclusion, marginalization and inequality among countries persisted, exacerbated by existing and evolving transboundary threats.

41. The 1990s could be described as a decade of international commitments to development, as demonstrated by a number of international conferences and summits on that issue. Yet, in his Report on the World Social Situation, 2001 (E/2001/70), the Secretary-General noted that the international community had failed to deliver on commitments made during that period. It was therefore imperative for all stakeholders to redouble their efforts, particularly with a view to halving poverty by 2015. While nations bore the primary responsibility to do their utmost to ensure social development, the cooperation and support of the international community were equally necessary. His delegation therefore welcomed the integrated approach outlined by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "Road map towards the implementation of the Millennium Declaration" (A/56/326). His Government, for its part, had developed a national programme aimed at reducing poverty, enforcing the rule of law and promoting sustainable development, in other words, ensuring human security through a policy encompassing the ecological, economic, social, political and legal aspects of development.

42. Education was a fundamental component of social development. And yet, according to the results of the worldwide 2000 assessment in the context of "Education for All" universal primary education was a challenge which the international community had not taken up. It must therefore make every effort to achieve the goal set out in the Dakar Framework for Action for Education for All, adopted at the World Education Forum, namely, that all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities should have access to primary education. His delegation supported the draft action plan for a United Nations Literacy Decade, referred to in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly" (A/56/140).

43. The attainment of those varied goals would be facilitated by cooperatives which, as indicated by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "Cooperatives and social development" (A/56/73), could make a significant contribution to alleviating poverty, promoting employment for the greatest number of people and ensuring the fullest possible participation of women, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities in development. His delegation had therefore welcomed the draft guidelines aimed at creating a supportive environment for the development of cooperatives (A/56/73, annex).

44. As the ageing of the population had become a global phenomenon, his delegation looked forward to the forthcoming Second World Assembly on Ageing.

45. **Mr. Andrabi** (Pakistan), speaking on agenda items 108 and 109, expressed his delegation's support for the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. He noted that social development essentially meant achieving a better quality of life for all segments of society, including the most vulnerable (older persons, disabled persons and children), while guaranteeing participation, social integration and equality of opportunities, and stressed the linkages between social and economic development of individuals, communities and societies.

46. The current world social situation was far from satisfactory. Progress in a number of key areas, was non-existent or marginal, or had even been reversed. Inequalities among countries and within societies were growing. The aggravation of abject poverty and endemic deprivation; discrimination, social exclusion, intolerance and marginalization; the persistence of conflicts; the disintegration of society owing to certain controversial social and cultural norms and attitudes; and the demographic decline and resultant decrease in the workforce were all factors that called for more global efforts and probably a revisiting of the international community's social agenda.

47. The natural family, based on kinship, was the fundamental unit of society. A stable and nurturing

family helped to achieve social coherence and harmony and, thus, progress. In Pakistan, the institution of the family remained strong. The traditional multi-generational family and the extended family could take care of the most vulnerable segments of society effectively. In order to ensure meaningful social development, there was a need to recognize the family as an institution and as the first line of defence against exclusion, marginalization and social disintegration. Unfortunately, however, at the international level, the institution of the family was a subject of controversy, aided by initiatives that were in fact aimed at imposing the behaviour and attitudes of one particular type of society on all societies the world over. Such attempts, under the guise of new concepts of social development, must be discouraged and eschewed, since they bred mistrust, misunderstanding and, ultimately, conflict between societies.

48. The ageing of the population was likely to become a major demographic phenomenon in the twenty-first century. The Second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held in Madrid in 2002, offered a unique opportunity to create a new world vision for the elderly based on a programme of action to promote their dignity, ensure their security and well-being, preserve their special status, protect them from exploitation and work for their social integration.

49. Pakistan, with over 7 million elderly people, derived guidance from the injunctions of Islam and the country's traditions, which ensured that younger family members considered it a sacred duty and privilege to care for their parents and their elders. To consolidate that fortunate state of affairs and make the best use of the capabilities, talent and experience of the elderly, the authorities were planning to establish a task force of distinguished senior citizens to conduct studies and issue recommendations based on realities as observed in practice.

50. Despite difficulties and a less than favourable international environment, Pakistan had made substantial progress in improving the quality of life of its citizens, in particular the most vulnerable, thanks to the appropriate steps that it had taken.

51. **Mr. Andjaba** (Namibia), speaking on agenda item 27, associated himself with the statement made by the representative of Botswana on behalf of the Southern African Development Community and the one made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

52. Since the World Summit for Social Development, Namibia had embarked upon the task of addressing social development core issues by establishing the required national mechanisms and programmes. In partnership with multilateral actors, in particular the United Nations and the World Bank, it had adopted a poverty reduction strategy with a long-term vision of economic prosperity for the country, outlining specific actions to achieve it. Its first national development plan (1995-2000) had also established poverty reduction as one of its development objectives. In addition, an action programme had been drawn up with the assistance of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). Namibia had also launched a public works policy which, apart from strengthening infrastructure, had produced promising results in respect of job creation and had made it possible to stabilize incomes during periods of drought and other disasters. It had furthermore made it possible to consider the question of the financing of such programmes, and had offered the opportunity to all parties to identify their roles and responsibilities in carrying out and following up on the national poverty reduction strategy.

53. Despite the significant efforts made under those initiatives, in Namibia as in other developing countries, poverty remained a major obstacle to the realization of social development goals and the major cause of most of the country's social ills. It would be difficult indeed to speak of social development without alluding to poverty and economic development.

54. The fact that Namibia had been classified among the medium-income countries was sometimes an obstacle to securing the financial resources required for the implementation of its national poverty reduction strategy. According to a recent survey, 47 per cent of Namibians were relatively poor and 13 per cent were extremely poor. It was therefore likely that the objective set at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly of halving poverty by 2015 would not be attained.

55. The HIV/AIDS pandemic was taking on alarming proportions in Namibia, and had begun to jeopardize the social and economic gains the country had made. Because it affected the economically active section of society, care was no longer given to the elderly, who

themselves must now care for the ill and for orphans. Furthermore, when both parents died of AIDS it was not uncommon for children to head families. The resources allocated to combating HIV/AIDS adversely affected the budgets available for other health problems or other sectors such as education, housing or poverty reduction. His delegation wished to re-emphasize that it would be difficult for Namibia to fight HIV/AIDS without the cooperation and support of the international community.

56. Namibia welcomed the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly. It was committed to achieving the objectives set in the Declaration of Commitment, and invited the rest of the international community to do the same. It looked forward to the Global AIDS and Health Fund becoming operational, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa.

57. Namibia, as many other developing countries, was faced with a dilemma in coping with globalization. While globalization had apparently benefited some regions of the world, the same could not be said for its effect on southern Africa. For some developing countries, globalization had not only diminished prospects for growth, it had aggravated inequalities and marginalized them still more in the world economy. Collective solutions must be sought by developing countries and developed countries alike to ensure that globalization benefited all countries in the world.

58. Lastly, his delegation welcomed the decision by the Commission for Social Development to address the question of the integration of social and economic policy in 2002, and considered that the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Mexico in 2002, would be a good opportunity to make progress in that field.

59. **Ms. Al Haj Ali** (Syrian Arab Republic) associated herself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The consolidation of social development and the right of every human being to live with dignity, free from poverty, disease, ignorance and the ills of society, were closely linked issues for which both Governments and the international community bore equal responsibility. Since the Copenhagen Summit, the social situation in the world had in fact deteriorated, in particular in the developing countries, and globalization, in spite of the opportunities for progress which it offered at the economic level and with regard to information and culture, had accentuated inequalities in living standards and exacerbated poverty and insecurity. The developing countries did not have the means to compete with the developed countries on international markets and the gap between the North and South had widened further. The limits to international cooperation were revealed at moments when concrete, material assistance to the developing countries was necessary. That assistance was often tied to unreasonable or unacceptable conditions, both with regard to basic issues such as debt relief and the opening of markets to developing countries' products, and of steps to ensure that economic progress had a direct impact on development and social progress.

60. In spite of those difficulties, her Government had made social development a priority. In the area of poverty eradication, the programmes and policies it had adopted were aimed at protecting low-income categories by guaranteeing all citizens access to basic social services. Efforts were under way to modernize the health and education sectors and steps had been taken in the area of food supply. Her Government had also organized, in cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a seminar on poverty eradication.

61. As far as employment was concerned, her Government had increased civil service salaries and equality of opportunity for all citizens, male and female, was guaranteed by the Constitution, as was the integration of the disabled into society through the provision of training and job opportunities. The Constitution also guaranteed the rights of workers up to and following retirement, with a view to protecting older persons and guaranteeing them life with dignity. In that context, her delegation would make every effort to ensure the success of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held in Madrid in 2002. Her Government had also made youth a priority: education was free and compulsory and special attention was paid to youth organizations and to job creation for young people.

62. Since much remained to be done in order to achieve a fully satisfactory level of social development, her Government was cooperating with non-governmental organizations and international organizations to define the necessary development strategies.

63. One of the fundamental building blocks of social development was the ability of every human being to enjoy the basic rights to education, health and employment in an environment conducive to living life with dignity and full respect for human rights. However, such words became meaningless in the context of foreign occupation and denial of individuals' most basic rights, as clearly illustrated by the situation in the Arab territories occupied by Israel in Palestine, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. In those areas, the Israeli occupation forces made daily use of every form of repression of freedoms and of discrimination against Arab citizens, imposing arbitrary measures and an economic blockade which prevented young people and adults of both sexes from living with dignity. In addition to the effects of the occupation, the appropriation of natural resources was jeopardizing the creation of conditions conducive to development. The Israeli occupation of the Golan Heights had likewise been very costly for the Syrian Arab Republic. Just as States, in particular the developing countries, were being asked to meet their commitments arising out of the World Summit for Social Development, pressure must be brought to bear on Israel to put an end to its occupation of Arab territories and to implement resolutions which carried international legitimacy by returning lands to their rightful owners if a climate favourable to social development, based on peace and security, was to be created in the region.

64. **Mr. Alcalay** (Venezuela) said his delegation associated itself fully with the statements made by the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and of Chile, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Rio Group, respectively.

65. The objectives defined in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action should be reviewed with a view to ensuring their implementation; that had been his delegation's focus in participating in the special session on achieving social development in a globalizing world.

66. In order to combat inequality in society, his Government had developed a comprehensive plan for social development based on social integration, sharing of responsibilities, participation of society and promotion of family structures, and covering health, education, income, productivity, housing, cultural and social values and local history. It had also created programmes aimed at developing the informal sector of the economy and provided assistance and funding to job-creating microenterprises and financial support to small and medium enterprises and agroindustry. The creation of new banking institutions had lowered the unemployment rate during the first half of 2001 and reduced the role of the informal sector.

67. On the subject of youth, article 79 of the Venezuelan Constitution provided that young people could and should participate in development and that the State, working with families and society, must help them to do so. The Government had to that end developed several programmes designed to protect against the social dangers to which young people were exposed, enable them to find work and integrate them into society. At the international level, Venezuela favoured any initiative to empower young people, and promoted cooperation and the exchange of information on experiences. It had sponsored the draft resolution submitted by Portugal on policies and programmes involving youth.

68. With regard to the disabled, article 80 of Venezuela's Constitution provided that all persons who were disabled or had special needs must be enabled to exercise their rights fully and be integrated into the family and the community, and that it was the responsibility of the State, in cooperation with families and society, to facilitate their integration into professional life. Accordingly, the Government had adopted policies and strategies promoting the active participation of the disabled in the economic, social, cultural and political life of the country, in order to create one society for all and to give support to families. The National Council for the Integration of the Disabled was the body coordinating those policies.

69. In the field of education, Venezuela had begun since 1999 to devise and put into effect a set of policies directed towards improving the quality of teaching within the framework of national integration. In particular, it had made changes in its programmes and systems for evaluation and for supervision of the ongoing training of teachers, and it had undertaken to improve existing facilities and create an appropriate legal framework, the aim being to adopt a national education project by consensus. In the process, it had been guided by a number of principles set out in the new Constitution, such as social justice, participatory democracy, free competition, environmental protection, solidarity, human dignity and the national good. At the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000, it had

reaffirmed its determination to achieve the objective of education for all.

70. Concerning the role that cooperatives played in social development, Venezuela had set up a single social fund to be used to improve the social programmes having to do with health, education, microbusinesses and cooperatives. It had also established a microcredit fund in order to help the most needy, especially women, as well as a Sovereign People's Bank to serve small and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, it had adopted a law to facilitate the creation of national cooperatives and strengthen the collective movement.

71. Venezuela attached special importance to the family, the basic unit for the development of individuals and peoples, and the guardian of values and cultural traditions. The family needed support, and article 75 of the Constitution provided for its protection. The observance in 2004 of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family would be the occasion for assessing the success of the programmes carried out locally, nationally and internationally.

72. The twenty-first century would see the ageing of the world's population and it was therefore wise to adopt policies that took full account of older persons and the role they played within society. Article 80 of the Constitution guaranteed older persons the full exercise of their rights and the benefit of social security. The National Geriatrics and Gerontology Institute was responsible for developing, coordinating, implementing and monitoring the programmes for older persons. A number of different centres provided services to them. The National Assembly was, furthermore, currently studying a draft bill on the protection of senior citizens.

73. **Mr. Kyazze** (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)), speaking on agenda item 108 and referring to the draft proposal and plan prepared by the Director-General of UNESCO for a United Nations literacy decade (A/56/114-E/2001/93 and Add.1), noted that the plan was based mainly on the results of the World Education Forum held in April 2000 in Dakar and on the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly held in July 2000 for the five-year review of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. The view was widely shared that literacy was at the heart of basic education and social development; and the challenge that it posed to both industrialized and developing countries had to be met not by one-time programmes but through intensive, focused and sustained efforts.

74. Literacy for all was a hard goal to achieve. There had been progress, but the end was not yet in sight. While the situation had improved since 1990, East and South Asia still had about 71 per cent of the world's illiterates, while illiteracy rates in Africa and Latin America averaged 40 per cent. Illiteracy was concentrated among the poorest of the poor and especially among women, who were the most affected by it; and certain issues of a cultural, ethnic or legal order were a hindrance to progress. It was unacceptable that some 875 million adults were illiterate and 113 million children attended no school of any sort. That represented a tremendous loss of human potential and a failure on the part of societies to carry out some of their most basic responsibilities by not addressing the causes of inequality or the lack of basic freedoms and of respect for human rights, all of which were sources of economic instability and civil disturbance.

75. The draft proposal and plan of action comprised a set of guidelines for all concerned rather than a series of actions to be taken. The conviction of UNESCO and its partners was that the Decade had most chance of succeeding at the country level and that it was for Governments and civil society to shape plans that responded to their own possibilities and needs.

76. The United Nations Literacy Decade must embrace not only adults but also children and young people, women and men, in and out of school. Solutions for different educational problems were interconnected.

77. Illiteracy was intertwined with poverty and social exclusion, while literacy was intertwined with empowerment, democracy and social development. Literacy was not just about the mechanics of reading and writing but also about restoring personal dignity and giving individuals the right to participate, demarginalizing the excluded and providing an opportunity to learn. Literacy was vital for sustainable human development. It facilitated environmental protection and preventive health education, especially where HIV/AIDS was concerned. It constituted a tool for transformation.

78. The goal of literacy for all would be achieved only through synergy of action among all the actors involved — Governments, NGOs, universities, public and private organizations and civil society at large. It was in that spirit that UNESCO, with the encouragement of the United Nations General Assembly, would continue to work with its partners towards comprehensive strategies for literacy for all as part of the agenda of education for all, with the goal of halving adult illiteracy by the year 2015.

79. **Mr. Holzmann** (World Bank), speaking on agenda items 108 and 109, observed that social protection was back on the international agenda. It played a key role in reducing poverty and providing income security for vulnerable people. There was a need to determine how poor people lived with risk and how Governments prepared for crises by having social safety nets in place. A number of developments had emerged.

80. Growth must be balanced by social policy measures. As the crisis which had rocked East Asia had shown, high growth rates were not enough. In the event of an economic shock, informal safety nets had a tendency to break down and public support measures were often inadequate. The slowdown in growth since the start of the year and the events of 11 September had proved that many countries were not adequately prepared and that potential risk must therefore be assessed and appropriate social protection measures prepared.

81. Social protection, with job creation and demarginalization, was an element of sustainable poverty reduction. As a primary element of security, it embraced both individual and macroeconomic risks. That approach mirrored poverty dynamics and economic mobility in developing countries. It had been observed that the poor consisted of two groups: those who remained poor and those who moved in and out of poverty, and it was beginning to be understood why. There was evidence that seemingly transitory shocks had long-term consequences. That suggested the need for the best instruments of social protection and social risk management.

82. Globalization had an impact which must be taken into account. While trade, technology and the introduction of new political systems had greatly improved the welfare of many around the world, they had also increased vulnerability and insecurity for other groups. Social protection therefore needed to be a safety net and springboard for the poor; it needed to focus more on poverty's causes than its symptoms, to take account of the reality that less than a quarter of the world's six billion people had access to social protection programmes and that less than five per cent could rely on their own assets in the event of problems and that elimination of poverty by the State was beyond the capacity of most developing countries.

83. The new World Bank document on social protection took all those considerations into account and defined security as freedom from vulnerability to poverty, both as an end of development and a means of achieving it. It noted that the poor were the most vulnerable group in society and should therefore have increased access to social risk-management instruments, particularly so as to help them to take more risks and in that way gradually move out of poverty.

84. Protecting the vulnerable was important for all ages. Children could have problems of nutrition or poor health, or they could be orphans as a result of AIDS or not have had the benefit of education; young people did not always have access to secondary schooling and job training; the working poor and non-poor were exposed to natural and man-made disasters and to political and health risks; the situation of the elderly was deteriorating because of population ageing, erosion of family support, urbanization and globalization and the lack of access to pension schemes. The World Bank had made social assessments and had studied gender- and health-related issues of ageing and income support systems for the elderly. It was assisting nearly 60 countries to reform their pension systems, but in many developing countries such systems were practically non-existent. That called for the introduction of non-contributory schemes, at least for the most vulnerable elderly.

85. Governments therefore had a major challenge to address and in so doing must cooperate with the private sector — while also regulating it — and with families, NGOs, trade unions and other civil society institutions. Cooperation was also needed between rich and poor countries and international organizations to prevent and mitigate risks and to help people according to their needs.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.

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Chairman: Mr. Al-Hinai ..... (Oman)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 27: Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (*continued*) (A/56/140)

Agenda item 108: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (*continued*) (A/56/3, A/56/57-E/2001/5, A/56/73-E/2001/68 and Add.1, A/56/114-E/2001/93 and Add.1, A/56/169, A/56/180 and A/56/288; A/C.3/56/L.2 and A/C.3/56/L.3; E/2001/104)

Agenda item 109: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing (*continued*) (A/56/152)

1. **Mr. Dahane** (Morocco) said that the international community was showing a growing interest in social development. At the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995, States had committed themselves to promoting social progress, taking into account the cultural, economic, political and spiritual realities. In the Millennium Declaration, adopted five years later, they had committed themselves to eradicating poverty, halving, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who suffered from hunger and who were unable to reach or afford safe drinking water, and ensuring that children everywhere would be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. The situation had, however, scarcely improved, especially in the developing countries.

2. Since the early 1990s, Morocco, as part of its social development strategy and later in the context of its preliminary draft economic and social development plan for the period 1996 to 2000, had endeavoured to promote sustainable human development and to combat poverty by focusing its activities on persons living below the poverty threshold, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas, those who were marginalized or excluded or those who needed institutionalized social welfare. The strategy should expand the access of the population to employment and to basic social services (the provision of drinking water, schooling, public housing). Morocco had also set itself the goals of ensuring basic education for all children between 6 and 15 years of age by the year 2006, paying special attention to girls and children of rural families, improving the living conditions of disabled persons by, inter alia, establishing specialized administrative structures in cooperation with various public agencies and non-governmental organizations, and improving the social situation of older people through a national plan of action which included social welfare measures specifically targeting them.

3. **Mr. Motomura** (Japan) said that the adoption of a Political Declaration in 2000, at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, had given a new impetus to the process of social development. One of the issues which caused the greatest concern was the ageing of the population. Japan, where the proportion of persons aged 65 years and older was expected to be almost 25 per cent in 2015, was aware of the economic and social repercussions of that demographic change; for that reason it was promoting the principle of "active ageing" and inviting older people to participate as fully as they wished in the economic and social life of the country. His delegation awaited with interest the Second World Assembly on Ageing, which, it was to be hoped, would provide an opportunity for the adoption of a revised plan of action on ageing which would reflect the current socio-cultural, economic and demographic realities in the world. It thanked the host country and invited Governments to find ways of mainstreaming the issue of the ageing of the world population in the assistance they provided to developing countries.

4. Turning to the issue of persons with disabilities, he noted that, in order to overcome the four types of barriers — physical, institutional, psychological and cultural — which prevented persons with disabilities from participating in social activities, his Government had formulated a new long-term programme whose main objectives were fully consistent with the measures proposed by the Secretary-General in his report (A/56/169), namely, to guarantee equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and enable them to participate fully in community life. Japan shared with developing countries new technologies it had developed and experience it had accumulated over the years. It also contributed through the Japanese Internal Cooperation Agency and other international organizations, such as the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability, its Cooperation Fund with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UNESCO. It welcomed the initiative of non-governmental organizations to

organize three international conferences on the issue, to be held in Japan in 2002.

5. **Mr. Yang** Xiaokun (China), taking the floor on agenda item 109, said that the first World Assembly on Ageing, held in 1982, which had designated 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons, had demonstrated that the international community attached particular importance to the ageing of the world's population. That question remained topical, as demonstrated by the forthcoming Second World Assembly on Ageing, whose rules of procedure and agenda had already been decided by the Economic and Social Council. The Council had also determined the conditions for participation by non-governmental organizations.

6. China — where persons over 60 years of age would represent one fourth of the total population by 2050 — had promulgated laws, regulations and policies on the protection on the rights and interests of older persons. It had gradually built up a pension and social security system through the joint efforts of the State, communities, families and individuals in keeping with the Chinese tradition of respect and compassion for older persons.

7. Since the issue of ageing had a political, economic, cultural and traditional impact, research was carried out jointly by the Government at the central and local levels, the gerontology society and research institutes.

8. **Mr. Navaratnarajah** (Sri Lanka) expressed his delegation's full support for the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action had highlighted the need to create an enabling environment for social development, eradicate poverty, promote productive employment and enhance social integration and capacity-building, while stressing that collective efforts to that end were essential. The twenty-fourth special session of the General Session had called for the allocation of additional resources for that purpose. The Commission for Social Development had identified a number of themes in its multi-year programme for 2002-2006.

9. Sri Lanka believed that social development must be based on a holistic and coordinated approach, be adequately financed and sustainable and take into account both the physical and mental aspects of the human condition. Since attaining independence, Sri Lanka had consistently invested in crucial social sectors such as health and education, with assistance from the private sectors and non-governmental organizations, achieving tangible progress as reflected in the social indicators for maternal and neonatal mortality, life expectancy, the overall health of the population, school enrolment and the literacy rate, and by its low population growth. Nonetheless, unemployment and poverty persisted; nearly one-fifth of the population was living below the poverty line. Sri Lanka had thus adopted a three-pronged strategy aimed at ensuring that the greatest number of people, including the poor, benefited from economic growth; protecting excluded and vulnerable groups and integrating them into economic activities; and empowering every individual to participate in decision-making and to enjoy a life of dignity, freedom and self-fulfilment.

10. The progress achieved in social development had also generated new problems, such as an ageing population. The Second World Assembly on Ageing would therefore be particularly important to Sri Lanka, which hoped that it would culminate in the adoption of a international plan of action. In its poverty reduction efforts, Sri Lanka had to grapple with external factors beyond its control, for example, restricted market access for its products. Without the necessary capital, it could not acquire modern technologies that were both efficient and affordable. Moreover, Sri Lanka received only limited development assistance; it therefore urged countries to allocate the agreed 0.7 per cent of their gross national product to official development assistance. An equitable economic order and the mobilization of adequate development resources, both human and financial, were two key factors which must be respected in order to ensure that the objectives of the World Summit and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly were achieved.

11. **Mr. Regmi** (Nepal) said that socio-economic disparities had widened over the last 10 years, despite the importance accorded to economic and social development by the international community, as demonstrated by numerous international conferences, particularly the World Summit for Social Development, and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, and notwithstanding the efforts of the United Nations and the United Nations Commission for Social Development in that area. Thus, islands of

prosperity had continued to prosper in an ocean of unspeakable poverty. One-fifth of the world's population enjoyed 80 per cent of its resources, while the majority lived on less than one dollar a day. People in developing countries were still living without access to clean drinking water, education or health care. Only a holistic and integrated approach to the social, economic and demographic dimensions of development would improve that situation, which constituted an affront to human dignity. The goal of reducing the number of people living in extreme poverty by half by the year 2015, established at the Millennium Summit, should be supported by targeted programmes, particularly in the areas of employment, education and health.

12. Nepal had adopted, as the sole objective of its ninth plan, the eradication of absolute poverty within the next 20 years, by promoting employment through a number of programmes, such as micro-credit for the poor, a "build your village yourself" scheme and a small-farm development project. Since decentralization of development activities to the local level was critical to ensure social development, Nepal had established autonomous local governments, and was encouraging the participation of the people in resource mobilization and the balanced distribution of the outputs of development at the local level. The family was considered to be the bedrock of Nepalese society; the Government was therefore determined to provide for the promotion and protection of children, support the development and integration of youth, who made up about 27 per cent of the population, ensure the social well-being of older people by providing a small allowance to those over 75 years of age and to widows of over 60, and assist the disabled and other vulnerable groups. Socio-economic development depended principally on the policies of national Governments, but developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, could not attain that goal without external resources, especially as most of their own extremely limited resources were allocated to debt servicing. Foreign direct investment in poor countries was almost non-existent; their own private sector was too small to create substantial opportunities, and their supply sector constraints did not allow them to reap substantial benefits from trade. Therefore, his delegation called on the industrialized countries to increase official development assistance and agree to greater debt relief and, lastly, associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

13. **Mr. Bhattacharjee** (India) said that it was difficult for developing countries to promote the principles of social justice and human rights when they were not even able to satisfy the most elementary needs of their population, confronted with an unfavourable global climate, marked by major trends outlined in the 1997 Report on the World Social Situation (E/1997/15-ST/ESA/252). Thus, there were a few havens of prosperity and larger enclaves of poverty, because developing countries were relegated to the lowest level of the production and distribution systems, while industrialized countries had moved to high profit-earning knowledge and technology-based economies; the share of low- and middle-income countries, as a proportion of the world gross domestic product, had declined from 28.6 per cent in 1980 to 21.6 per cent in 1998, while that of high-income countries had increased from 72.4 per cent to 78.4 per cent; owing to globalization, the value of world imports and exports had increased at a compounded average annual rate of 6.25 per cent between 1980 and 1998, but the share of developing countries had remained stagnant at a quarter of world trade; inequalities within countries had grown during the 1980s; under the effect of liberalization, workers had shifted from the tradable to the non-tradable informal sector, bringing down wages and deepening the dichotomy between the formal and informal sectors. The financial crisis, the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS, the increase in poverty and unemployment, and the significant decline in international cooperation contributed to worsening the situation.

14. Referring to the report of the Secretary-General on cooperatives in social development (A/56/73-E/2001/68), he said that it was regrettable that only 21 Governments had given their views on the draft guidelines aimed at creating a supportive environment for the development of cooperatives. India had been a pioneer in the cooperative movement, starting in 1905, and it continued to play an important role not only as a mode of production but also as a distribution system.

15. It was heartening that almost all Member States had implemented national youth policies, as the Secretary-General pointed out in his report on implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (A/56/180), since it was time to look at sectoral issues that affected youth

throughout the world, particularly the issue of employment.

16. Since 2001 was the International Year of Volunteers, India, which contributed to the Special Voluntary Fund of the United Nations Volunteers and had several volunteers working for the United Nations, hoped that the proposed draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

17. Lastly, on the eve of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, it was necessary to take full advantage of the productive capacities of older persons, particularly in developing countries, where the proportion of persons over 60 years of age in the population would be increasing, taking care that their integration into society was not perceived to be in conflict with opportunities for youth and other age groups.

18. **Ms. Mahouve** (Cameroon) associated herself with the statement made by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on implementation of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly. She stressed that there was a glaring contradiction between the stated desire of the international community to work for social development and the current situation in the world: 3 billion people lived on less than two dollars a day, 1 billion people, including 600 million women were illiterate, 1.4 billion people did not have access to basic social services, 14 million children still died every year from lack of health care and more than 158 million workers were unemployed. Her delegation, convinced that the eradication of poverty was currently the main challenge, welcomed the role played by the United Nations and international institutions in general, in particular the Bretton Woods institutions. She supported the commitments made in the social sector during the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in particular with regard to respect for basic principles and rights such as the right to work and the need to invest in social infrastructure and reinforce the health and education sectors. She welcomed the decision of the Economic and Social Council to devote its 2002 high-level segment to the theme of development of human capital, in particular in the education and health sectors. A comprehensive approach must be adopted with regard to strategies to eliminate poverty, by paying particular attention to the needs of women and children and by highlighting access to basic primary education, literacy, life expectancy, reduction of infant and maternal mortality rates, and the fight against unemployment. Her Government had succeeded in promoting growth and controlling inflation and, with the help of external partners, had worked to maintain peace, security and stability, consolidate democracy and the rule of law and promote and protect human rights. A series of initiatives had been launched, for example the declaration on a strategy to combat poverty, a policy declaration on the health sector which stressed the fight against pandemics, a law on educational priorities which focused on basic education, an action plan for nutrition and food security, a national policy paper on employment, a new urban strategy and a national programme for good governance and combating corruption. Those efforts had led to real progress, in particular a perceptible increase in school attendance, encouraged by providing public primary education free of charge, strengthening of medical coverage through the creation of numerous health centres and a national distribution centre for supplying essential medicines, as well as gradual reduction in the unemployment rate.

19. **Mr. Klamberg** (Sweden), speaking as youth representative in his delegation, on agenda item 108, expressed regret that too few countries, in particular the developing countries, had included youth representatives in their delegations. In the era of globalization, young people, who are well aware of the difficulties, challenges and opportunities connected with that phenomenon, could play an active role in the development of a democratic system and should be included in decision-making at the local, national, regional and global levels so that their concerns, in particular with regard to access to education, health and security, could be taken into account.

20. In Sweden, many local authorities had established youth councils so that young people could be involved in politics and make known their views, although to a large extent, for such bodies to be truly effective, local officials had to be willing to listen. At the international level, young people had prepared a common statement during the World Health Organization (WHO) European Ministerial Conference on Young People and Alcohol and had been active participants in the working group and plenary discussions. He called on Member States to implement the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy adopted by the fourth World Youth Forum, which contained valuable recommendations on areas of specific concern to youth,

such as how to bridge the digital divide, the fight against unemployment and poverty, the environment, social integration, conflict prevention through the building of a culture of peace, participation, combating discrimination, and the fight against HIV/AIDS, which currently affected millions of young people. In order to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic, strategies must be implemented which took into account young people's lifestyle, stressing information and the use of condoms, the most effective method to date to stop the spread of infection.

21. Finally, with regard to health and young people, he called attention to the fate of women who were victims of genital mutilation, a practice which violated their basic right to control their own bodies and called on Member States to take steps to put an end to that practice, for example by increasing awareness and organizing open discussion in the communities concerned and including revision of their penal codes.

22. **Ms. Korneliouk** (Belarus), speaking on agenda item 27, welcomed the fact that the Commission for Social Development had adopted a multi-year programme of work for the period 2002-2006. Recalling that the documents that had emerged from the World Summit for Social Development and the special session of the General Assembly stipulated that it was in the first place for Governments to ensure their people's social development and welfare, she said that Belarus had set itself the task of establishing a market economy with a social dimension, taking into account the mentality, history and traditions of the Belarusian people and the experience of other States. With that in view, it had prepared a national strategy for sustainable development, an integrated system of social welfare measures and a development programme to be implemented by 2005, centred on improved State structures and on socio-economic development. The programme was, inter alia, aimed at enhancing the country's demographic situation by reducing infant mortality and mortality among the active population, especially men, and by raising life expectancy and increasing the population's income by some 60 per cent and real wages by approximately 80 per cent.

23. Mindful that social development was linked to the country's economic growth, Belarus had set out to improve its economic situation and increase investments and housing construction; moreover, its gross domestic product had risen by 27.7 per cent in the previous four years. The country had embarked on a strategy of social reforms designed to guarantee access to basic social services and to enable all persons who were capable of working to provide for their needs and for those of their families and to enable those who could not do so to receive social assistance. There was, of course, still the problem of finding the resources to finance that social assistance without jeopardizing the development of other sectors, in particular the education sector, in which the adult literacy rate currently stood at 98.4 per cent.

24. In conclusion, she said that, if the goals were to be met, coordinated, effective and integrated action was called for at both the national and the international levels.

25. **Ms. Kidanu** (Ethiopia) said that her delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. She stressed the difficulty of achieving social development in a situation in which poverty, unemployment, conflict and natural and man-made disasters prevailed, as they did in Ethiopia, where the majority of the population lived in absolute poverty and drought was recurrent, and where environmental degradation and population pressure had weakened the resource base on which sustainable development depended. The decline in official development assistance and the crippling debt burden had only exacerbated the situation, especially in the least developed countries. Therefore, if social development efforts were to bear fruit and economic reforms were to succeed, creditor nations and multilateral financial institutions should simply cancel the debt, instead of rescheduling it or proposing the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative.

26. It was her delegation's conviction that each country must take charge of its own social development and that the appeal to the international community was merely a call for it to help the least developed countries to remove the obstacles to their social development. That was why, in order to fulfil the commitments entered into at the World Summit for Social Development, her Government had adopted policies and strategies on population, health, education, women, employment and HIV/AIDS centred on the family (all discriminatory provisions concerning marriage and the family had been struck from its domestic legislation), children, youth, women (whose fundamental rights the authorities had been at pains to protect) and older persons, including those with disabilities, on the

understanding that responsibility for meeting the needs of those social groups rested with the communities, civil society, non-governmental organizations and the Government.

27. The Government had introduced a microcredit scheme for young people, so that they could engage in income-generating activities, and had endeavoured to increase their participation in various social and development activities. The national programme of action for persons with disabilities was based on the development social welfare policy and the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. The Rehabilitation Affairs Department, for its part, was conducting campaigns to raise public awareness of the contribution that older persons could make to society with their knowledge, experience and wisdom.

28. **Mr. Gabay** (Israel), speaking on agenda item 108, said he was convinced that the entire international community and each individual State should make the participation of young people in decision-making and their integration into society one of their priority tasks. He paid special tribute to the Programme on Youth of the Division for Social Policy and Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, and noted with satisfaction that activities undertaken on behalf of young people as part of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond had been stepped up. Young people had shown themselves worthy of confidence by their creative and innovative talents in the high-technology area and their ability to set up and run small companies in those fields and to use computers to find markets which generated jobs and income; it would therefore be beneficial to invite them to take seats in parliaments and jobs in administrations and to become members of delegations to international organizations. That might also be a way of showing their elders that they did not have a monopoly on wisdom, the spirit of initiative or the power to put ideas into practice.

29. In order for globalization to improve the situation of young people, and particularly young people in the developing countries and the least developed countries who would be forging their countries' futures, they had to have the daily tools of scientific and technological progress.

30. It might perhaps be a good idea to organize economic summits, on the model of the Davos Forum, which would enable young people in developing countries to meet young business leaders, young experts in advanced technologies and young specialists in communications and information.

31. He welcomed the fact that the fourth session of the World Youth Forum of the United Nations System, meeting in Dakar, Senegal, had adopted the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy which provided a comprehensive review of the question and at the same time made a real plea on behalf of youth. Even if they implemented only half of the recommendations it contained, countries would, in his opinion, contribute to the well-being of all social strata in their societies because, after all, the youth of today would soon be adults and eventually older persons. For its part, Israel was committed to a dynamic policy on behalf of youth, based on the commitments set out in the Copenhagen Declaration.

32. Replying to the somewhat disagreeable remarks which the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic had made with regard to Israel when speaking of the occupied territories and human rights violations, he said, with regard to the first point, that the Syrian Arab Republic should begin by putting its own house in order and, with regard to the second point, that it ill became that country to be giving lessons to others. It would be much better employed putting the emphasis on negotiations, the peace process and regional cooperation.

33. **Ms. Elliott** (Guyana), associating her delegation with the statements made by the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, Saint Lucia on behalf of the CARICOM Group, and Chile on behalf of the Rio Group, said that leading financial experts were pointing to a dangerous slow-down of the global economy in both the developed and the developing countries. It was a slow-down that the attack on the World Trade Center had worsened by undermining consumer confidence in the United States, which was the driving force of the global economy. The situation was particularly worrying because it was likely to increase the number of people living in poverty, as well as the number of unemployed and underemployed, worsen health problems and put health systems under severe pressure. In that regard, her delegation particularly welcomed the fact that the Millennium Declaration had placed emphasis on social development issues, and it awaited with interest the United Nations Conference on

Financing for Development, which, it was convinced, had the potential to mobilize resources and thereby promote the creation of an environment that was favourable to social development.

34. As far as social development was concerned, the international community had wisely focused on access to basic social services, poverty eradication, social integration, full employment and gender equality. Her delegation welcomed the UNESCO proposal for a United Nations literacy decade in light of the fact that there were still 880 million illiterate young people and adults worldwide and that information and education were more indispensable for development than ever. With regard to young people, particularly, her delegation was fully persuaded that they had to be given every opportunity to realize their potential as agents for change and development. It was necessary to be vigilant in addressing the challenges which prevented youth empowerment such as poverty, hunger, homelessness, disease, crime, violence and alienation.

35. The International Year of Older Persons had demonstrated the need to develop long-term policies for that group of the population. The Second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held in Madrid, Spain, in 2002, would enable the attention of the international community to be focused on the concerns of older persons, the development implications of ageing societies and the need for a lifetime approach to education, health, employment and the upgrading of skills. Guyana intended to play an active part in the preparatory process for the Assembly.

36. In presenting his country's budget for 2001, the Minister of Finance of Guyana had reaffirmed the importance of placing people at the centre of development and had proposed a number of important initiatives in the areas of education, health, water supply and sanitation, housing and poverty programmes. The Government of Guyana had budgeted almost G$ 12 billion in 2002 for improving the quality of the education system and for continuing to emphasize individual responsibility, equity and quality, primary health care and institutional strengthening.

37. With respect to poverty reduction, she said that her Government was implementing an employment strategy which involved providing an investment-friendly climate that would create earning opportunities for all Guyanese. It would also use the resources made available to it in the context of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative to bolster expenditure in key sectors such as health, housing, water supply, sanitation and education, so as to improve living conditions. Those measures would be added to existing programmes that targeted different categories of the poor, especially youth and rural communities.

38. It must be reiterated that a long-term approach to social development was indispensable; it must involve all actors in society and the international community. The international community had a particularly significant role to play in reducing income disparities among countries, as well as in ensuring that the developed countries met their commitment to allocate 0.7 per cent of GNP for official development assistance, debt relief and greater market access for exports of developing countries.

39. The new global human order proposed in General Assembly resolution 55/48, which focused on human development and poverty reduction, was of particular importance.

40. **Ms. Nicole** (Benin), speaking on behalf of her country and other West African countries (Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo), said that those delegations endorsed the statement made by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

41. Social development was a matter of serious concern to the West African countries, most of which were developing countries that also belonged to the group of least developed countries. The fact that the primary responsibility for development lay with government did not detract from concern regarding the resources needed for action. Indeed, the economic liberalization that many developing countries had carried out had not only aggravated their situation but had also led to a weakening of the State and a breakdown of management, which, if they continued, could end in disaster. Despite the laudable efforts that had been made after the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, substantial segments of the population of the West African countries still did not have access to potable water, electricity and other forms of energy or adequate primary health care, and their illiteracy rates remained high. Far from a reduction of the role of the State, what was needed was

a stronger State that would be able to deal with the problems of society. The stakes were particularly high for the West African countries, given that solving their social problems was a prerequisite to restoring peace to a region torn apart by wars caused mainly by poverty and underdevelopment, and to moving on to modernization and globalization.

42. The West African countries faced tremendous difficulties as they strove to attain social development. In addition to the aforementioned armed conflicts, they were faced with the AIDS pandemic, and other contagious diseases, unemployment, child labour, a decline in the literacy rate and in agricultural production, poverty, the breakdown of families and dwindling resources. The UNDP Report on Human Development also showed that the ten most backward of all the African least developed countries were in West Africa.

43. In order to get out of the rut they were in, the West African countries were working in key areas such as health, employment, education, refugees and peacekeeping. In Lusaka, Zambia, the heads of State and other African leaders had launched an initiative for Africa which, if successful, should make pacification possible and allow for progress towards democracy, proper management of public affairs, cooperation and regional integration, and help solve many problems in the areas of education and health. The international community should increase its economic and financial aid to the least developed African countries, especially the West African countries, and provide them with greater debt relief.

44. The problems of the West African countries had seriously compromised the fabric of their society. The very essence of family life was threatened. Parents were placing their children with other families in order to keep them from suffering the torment of poverty, and more and more older persons were being abandoned. Accordingly, the West African countries attached great importance to the second World Assembly on Ageing, in which they planned to participate actively, and to the follow-up to the International Year of the Family and preparations for the tenth anniversary of the Year, to be held in 2004.

45. The West African countries looked to the Commission for Social Development for help in their social development efforts and were committed to supporting it as it carried out its difficult task.

46. **Ms. Rajaonarivelo** (Madagascar) said that the reports before the Committee underscored once again that globalization widened the gap in development between South and North. The thinking behind globalization — liberalization, privatization, State disengagement — resulted in a deterioration of social services in the least developed countries that generated poverty and violence. Globalization could have favourable repercussions on the economic and social development of the developing countries, but only if their needs were taken into account, as emphasized in the Millennium Declaration.

47. Madagascar wholeheartedly supported the statement made by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Her Government recognized the basic importance of social and human progress and was endeavouring to implement the recommendations in the Millennium Declaration and the Copenhagen Programme of Action. By joining the consensus achieved during the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, it had reaffirmed its determination to achieve the goals of the session. Madagascar was convinced that other countries as well would do their utmost to achieve those goals, which were essentially to eradicate poverty, to create employment and to promote social integration.

48. During the 1990s, the international community had set itself the target of halving the number of persons living in extreme poverty by 2015. Unfortunately, at the moment — as brought out in the Economic and Social Council's *Report on the World Social Situation, 2001* — the experience of many countries was that the situation was clearly worsening, with rising social exclusion, instability, insecurity and crime. As all were well aware, that deterioration was due to the lack of resources, which aggravated economic problems. Madagascar thus looked forward with anticipation to the convening in 2002 of the International Conference on Financing for Development, which should make it possible to reassess the financial needs of the poor countries. By the same token, without minimizing the importance of organized transnational crime or of terrorism, economic and social development should be considered a priority.

49. While Governments were the ones primarily responsible for social development, they must nonetheless be able to count on international cooperation, which therefore remained crucially

important. It would thus be particularly desirable if official development assistance to the developing countries and especially to the poorest countries was increased, if their debt was altogether cancelled, if their products were given greater access to world markets and if the countries were equipped with the new technologies.

50. To ensure its own social development, Madagascar was carrying out a programme centred on the reduction of poverty, which was essential for the well-being of the population and the maintenance of social peace but was difficult to achieve. Low household incomes and the need to spend most of the family budget for food had the effect not only of limiting access to health services but also of lowering school attendance rates and increasing school drop-out rates, thus robbing the younger generation of any possibility of improving their lives. The Government hoped that by taking steps to encourage increased growth, create jobs, expand education, develop human resources and broaden the safety nets and the access of the poor to health services, it would break that vicious circle.

51. Madagascar agreed that there was a danger that the ageing of the population might compromise human development, and believed it essential to improve the situation of the elderly in order to enable them to participate fully in social life. In that connection, her delegation thanked the Government of Spain for offering to host the Second World Assembly on Ageing and hoped that once the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing was revised, it would be possible to offer greater protection to older persons and give them a greater share in social development.

52. **Mr. Langmore** (Director, Division for Social Policy and Development) said that the consideration of agenda items 27, 108 and 109 had not only been full and interesting but had also been given greater urgency by the very fresh memory of the attack against the World Trade Center, to which many delegations had referred. During the debate, the Committee had for the first time considered the follow-up to the outcome document of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly held in Geneva in 2000 on social development, and had been able to use the *Report on the World Social Situation, 2001* (ST/ESA/277-E/2001/70) to guide and enrich the discussion.

53. After a systematic review of the major themes touched on in the statements of the forty or so delegations which had spoken, he noted that six resolutions relating to the agenda items under consideration were in the process of negotiation. The urgency of the debate showed that social development was in the forefront of the concerns of nations and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs was thereby encouraged to work even more closely with its national and international partners to implement the social development strategies.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.

United Nations A/C.3/56/SR.8

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Chairman: Mr. Al-Hinai ..... (Oman)

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01-57744 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the United Nations and its Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan

1. **The Chairman** welcomed the fact that the United Nations and Secretary-General Kofi Annan had received the Nobel Peace Prize. It was not the first time that the Organization had been accorded such a distinction, the prize having previously been awarded posthumously in 1961 to the former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld and, in 1988, to the peacekeeping forces of the United Nations.

Agenda item 110: Crime prevention and criminal justice (A/56/3, 83, 151, 155, 222, 380, A/56/402-E/2001/105, A/56/403)

Agenda item 111: International drug control (A/56/3, 83, 157, 222)

2. **Mr. Maertens** (Deputy Director of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention) said that Afghanistan was a particular focus of his Office's efforts, not only with regard to international drug control, but also — at least indirectly — in the field of crime prevention. Telling results had been obtained following the ban imposed by the Taliban in July 2000 on opium poppy cultivation in areas under their control. Approximately 185 tons of opium poppies had been produced that year, representing a 94 per cent decrease compared to the 2000 harvest (3,300 tons) and a 97 per cent decrease compared to the record harvest of 1999 (4,700 tons). Those results were all the more heartening given that no cultivation displacement had occurred either within the country or abroad. However, the decrease in production had not as yet impacted on the heroin supply in the region or in Europe, owing to the size of accumulated stocks. Afghan farmers, suddenly deprived of their income from opium poppy cultivation, were in an emergency situation that had been exacerbated by severe drought. In close consultation with Member States — including Afghanistan's neighbours — a three-pronged strategy had been pursued: to ensure that the Taliban maintained their ban; to achieve the destruction of heroin stocks and clandestine laboratories; and to realize an emergency humanitarian aid programme for the farmers that had been most seriously affected. However, the suspension of the programme in the wake of the tragic events of 11 September could lead the farmers to contravene that ban. Drug-trafficking posed a genuine threat to Afghanistan's neighbours such as the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Central Asian countries that were experiencing increasingly worrying levels of drug addiction; emergency assistance should thus be provided to States finding themselves in the first line of defence against drug-trafficking from Afghanistan owing to their geographical location. Measures had already been implemented at the national level to stem the flow of drugs from Afghanistan, such as in Tajikistan, where a national drug control agency had been set up with assistance from the Office, permitting the seizure of three tons of heroin in 2001. At the regional level, the "Six plus Two" Group had adopted a Regional Action Plan against drugs in September 2000; an International Conference on Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia had been held in Tashkent in October 2000, jointly by the Office and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), with a view to strengthening regional cooperation in the area of drug-trafficking control and drug addiction; Central Asian countries had signed a memorandum of understanding in 1996 on cooperation in the field of drug control, to which the Office was a signatory along with the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan and the Aga Khan Development Network; that group had also endorsed a Strategic Framework for Central Asia which had been elaborated in line with recommendations of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

3. Significant results had also been achieved in South-East Asia, where subregional cooperation initiatives abounded, such as the memorandum of understanding that had been in existence among the six Mekong countries for over 10 years, and the action plan adopted by the ASEAN countries and China. The Lao Government had decided to eradicate illicit poppy crops by 2005, two years before the original deadline set at the special session, and the cultivated area had already been reduced by 36 per cent since 1998, mostly in the areas benefiting from alternative development projects. Myanmar was currently the largest single source of opium poppy, although the Government had been able to reduce production by 38 per cent over the past five years, even with very limited international assistance. Progress continued in Latin America, including Peru, Colombia, where UNDCP endeavoured to support the Government's anti-drug policy through alternative development projects, and Bolivia, where

the area used for illicit coca cultivation had dropped from 33,800 hectares in 1997 to only 3,100 in 2001. The international community's assistance was, however, crucial for the implementation of alternative development activities. Lastly, the formulation of a comprehensive strategy for Africa was under way and the proposed budget of UNDCP for the biennium 2002-2003, which should place greater emphasis on demand reduction, provided for an increase in the funding available for Africa.

4. Following the regular triennial review and the review of management and administrative practices conducted by the Office for Internal Oversight Services, and the inspection by the Board of Auditors, the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNDCP) had embarked on a set of reforms aimed at greater delegation of authority not only in programme matters but also in financial and budgetary matters. To that end, a results-based approach would be adopted for the next biennium 2002-2003, and a planning and evaluation unit would be set up within UNDCP, which was reinforcing its synergy with the Centre for International Crime Prevention.

5. **Mr. Vetere** (Director of the Centre for International Crime Prevention) said that the adoption by the General Assembly in November 2000 of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the three protocols thereto was highly significant. The Centre was actively endeavouring to promote its entry into force, inter alia, by organizing regional and subregional seminars and advising States on request. The Convention had been signed by high-ranking political figures from 123 States and the European Community at the Signing Conference; that was the largest number of opening signatures for a Convention in United Nations history. The current status was 132 signatories to, and 5 ratifications of, the Convention, 91 signatories to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, 87 to the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, and 5 to the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition. He urged Member States which had not yet done so to sign and ratify the Convention as soon as possible and hoped that the draft resolution on strengthening capacity-building and technical cooperation activities for the implementation of the Convention and the protocols thereto would be adopted.

6. Moreover, pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 55/59 and 55/60, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had, through the Economic and Social Council, recommended to the General Assembly plans of action for the implementation of the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century, which provided valuable guidance to the Secretariat and to Member States. Following the tragic events of 11 September 2001, the international community was called upon to be more resolute than ever in its fight against terrorism. The Terrorism Prevention Branch was responsible for the international dimension of that fight, within the framework of the Vienna Declaration, but it was short of resources and staff, the latter consisting of only two Professional staff members. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had adopted a draft resolution entitled, "Role, function, periodicity and duration of the United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders" (A/C.3/56/L.4) which should facilitate its task and which it recommended for adoption by the General Assembly. It was also striving to combat corruption on the ground and was actively participating in the negotiations on a new United Nations convention against corruption, particularly in defining its field of application, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 55/61 and 55/188.

7. Increased representation of the Centre for International Crime Prevention at the regional and national levels had been achieved through the conversion of eight UNDCP offices into units of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention. It was conducting some 30 technical assistance projects in close cooperation with UNDCP and had launched an anti-corruption programme with the participation of Benin, Colombia, Hungary, Lebanon, Nigeria, Romania and South Africa, while discussions were also under way with other countries, including Indonesia and Iran. As to trafficking in human beings, as part of its programme, the Centre was implementing four technical cooperation programmes: in the Philippines, in the Czech Republic and Poland, in Brazil and in West Africa. The discrepancy between the Centre's resources and the mandate entrusted to it had increased. He thanked those Member States which had made provision for a modest increase in the Centre's

regular budget in the next programme budget and asked to make further efforts and increase their voluntary contributions to the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund, which had received only $3 million a year over the past three years.

8. **Mr. Andrabi** (Pakistan) said that the very marked reduction in poppy cultivation as a result, inter alia, of the ban imposed by the Taliban in Afghanistan, was leading to a supply crisis on the international drug markets as well as a steep increase in prices, which might constitute a particularly strong incentive for poppy growers. He would like to know how the international community was preparing to cope with that situation and what measures were being taken to reduce the demand for narcotic drugs. With regard to the countries in the first line of defence against the shipment of drugs from Afghanistan, in particular the Islamic Republic of Iran and his own country, where destitution and poverty aggravated the phenomenon of drug addiction, he wished to know whether specific proposals were being considered in order to continue to help those countries not only to control the shipment of drugs to other countries in the world, but also to protect themselves domestically.

9. **Ms. Stevens** (Belgium) speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated central and eastern European countries and Norway, said that the European Union favoured better integration of the work by UNDCP in the programmes of other United Nations bodies and agencies. She wished to know more about the Programme's strategy in that regard and the reinforcing of the synergy between it and the Centre for International Crime Prevention (CICP). The European Union would also like to have more precise information on the Centre's priorities and how it envisaged its work with regard to criminal justice and crime prevention.

10. **Mr. Vetere** (Director, Centre for International Crime Prevention), referring to the synergy between UNDCP and the Centre, said that some field offices, the number of which had been increased to eight, were capable of dealing both with drug control and crime prevention and were situated principally in the regions where the Programme and the Centre were both carrying out programmes or activities, such as in southern Africa, central Africa and other regions. Other activities were carried out jointly, inter alia, within the framework of the implementation of the Global Programme against Money Laundering, for questions concerning flows of illegal funds and capital, which were not only the result of drug-related crime, but also organized transnational crime. UNDCP and the Centre also worked more closely with regard to recovering illegal financial assets, within the framework of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 55/188 and the relevant provisions of the new United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. In addition, the Programme and the Centre jointly organized training seminars, meetings and activities on questions related to mutual assistance, extradition and legal assistance in general.

11. The Centre's priorities were based on the medium-term plan and the programme budget. For example, under the next programme budget, the Centre would take account of the recommendations made by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its last session as well as the recommendation by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) advocating a more balanced approach to the problem of crime in order to take account of such aspects as computer-related crime or the prevention of terrorism. In that regard, the Centre was considering co-sponsoring, together with OECD, a conference to be held in December 2001 in Kyrgyzstan on measures to combat terrorism.

12. Lastly, the Centre's main priorities were generally those indicated by Member States through intergovernmental bodies.

13. **Ms. Vadjati** (Islamic Republic of Iran) thanked the Deputy Director of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention for drawing the Committee's attention to the difficult situation affecting the neighbouring countries of Afghanistan, a responsibility that her Government had assumed for many years. Combating the shipment of drugs through her country to Europe could not be effectively continued without the support and renewed cooperation of the international community.

14. **Mr. Maertens** (Deputy Director, United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention), responding to questions raised by the representative of Pakistan, said that the Office's strategy for Afghanistan up to the end of 2000 and the beginning of 2001, shortly after the Taliban had prohibited opium poppy cultivation, had focused on three areas: continuing to monitor the situation through an annual study on opium poppy production; conducting pilot programmes in four

districts of Afghanistan, resulting in the disappearance of 50 per cent of the opium poppy crop in those districts; and setting up a "cordon sanitaire" around Afghanistan in cooperation with neighbouring countries in order to halt the shipment of illegal drugs from Afghanistan. Once it had been confirmed in May 2001 that the ban imposed by the Taliban in July 2000 was being applied in all the regions under their control, the Office had conducted negotiations and consultations with its partners in order to re-evaluate its strategy. Following those consultations, a decision had been taken to maintain the Office's presence in the country, continue monitoring the situation with regard to opium poppies, and provide emergency assistance to farmers who had no other cash crops because of the drought or the ban. The Office had also been requested to ensure that the Taliban would keep their commitment with regard to the complete ban on opium poppy cultivation and take measures to destroy existing stocks.

15. The amount of opium on the global market had been reduced by about 3,000 tons, or 300 tons of heroin. The price of poppies had risen from about $30 to about $700 per kilogram, and then had fallen to about $80 per kilogram after the attacks of 11 September. The attacks had forced the Office to freeze all its projects and evacuate its staff, but the Office had continued its monitoring activities. It had begun to receive reports that the Taliban had once again authorized farmers to produce opium. In recent weeks, the Office had held in-depth consultations with its member States, which had agreed that, apart from the continuation of monitoring and information-gathering activities, the Office should focus as much as possible on the programmes being carried out in countries bordering Afghanistan.

16. The Office had developed a strategic programme framework for Central Asia. It had supported the establishment of a national drug control agency in Tajikistan, and the Government of Kyrgyzstan had asked it to provide support for a similar initiative in that country. Entities and cooperation of that type had proved their usefulness: in 2001, three tons of heroin had been seized in Tajikistan, whereas virtually none had been seized two years earlier.

17. Programmes to prevent and treat drug addiction had been launched in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. A balanced approach was essential in those countries and in other Central Asian countries through which drugs from Afghanistan were transported to the Russian Federation and then to Western Europe. All those movements were examined on a daily basis. In Europe, the impact of the 3,000-ton reduction in the amount of opium on the market would not be felt until 2002.

18. Accordingly, the countries surrounding Afghanistan had been encouraged to cooperate closely with the Office. Various types of assistance were available from the Office, which stayed in constant contact with donors to mobilize more resources. With the Office's help, the "Six plus Two" group had adopted a regional plan of action on judicial cooperation, law enforcement, demand reduction and the control of precursors.

19. With respect to the integration of the issue of drug control into other programmes, which had been mentioned by the representative of Belgium, he said that the Administrative Committee on Coordination had adopted guidelines recommending the integration of a drug control component into other priority programmes. Accordingly, in the Office's budget proposals for the coming biennium, all drug programmes had been expressly linked to other issues such as poverty eradication, crime prevention and HIV/AIDS.

20. The Office was involved in both policy integration, through the implementation of the relevant guidelines, and operational integration, through its field offices. Moreover, through its cooperation with the activities of resident coordinators and with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, it had succeeded in ensuring that other entities such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank integrated the drug control component into the programmes they sponsored, such as the alternative development programmes being carried out in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Currently, more than half of the Office's programmes were executed by or in cooperation with other entities. For example, in the area of demand reduction, there was a very good synergy with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), of which the Office was one of the sponsoring organizations.

21. **Mr. Mei** Yuncai (China) asked for details on the accomplishments and future projects of UNDCP in the

area of crop substitution, particularly in South-East Asia and India.

22. **Mr. Bhattacharjee** (India) said that he would like to know the exact amount of the large stocks of poppies and opium that still existed despite the ban imposed by the Taliban in 2000, which meant that the drop in production had had no impact on the supply of heroin in Central Asia and Europe. He asked whether those who held the stocks had been identified.

23. He also asked how he could obtain the plans of action drawn up in Vienna, which had been mentioned by a previous speaker. With respect to the use of drug money to finance criminal activities such as arms trafficking and terrorism, he asked whether the plan of action on terrorism to be adopted by consensus took into account the issue of assets derived from drug trafficking.

24. **Mr. Maertens** (Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention) reminded the representative of China that, in 2001, Myanmar, a South-East Asian country, had become the world's largest producer of opium poppies (1,000 tons). However, the problem of illicit cultivation could not be solved without regional cooperation. The memorandum of understanding concluded in 1996 among all the countries of the region and UNDCP had enabled a number of countries to achieve significant results. The Lao People's Democratic Republic had pledged to achieve the goals set at the special session of the General Assembly three years earlier than the established time frame; in other words, by 2005 instead of 2008. Other countries such as Viet Nam had also made great strides. In Myanmar, the 30-per-cent decline in opium poppy production had taken place primarily in the northern part of the Shan region, where poppy cultivation predominated. A programme of alternative development activities was currently being tested in one sector and was in its second phase. However, the Office's activities in Myanmar remained modest owing to a shortage of resources, a large share of which were provided by just two donor countries.

25. In reply to the representative of India, he said that the Office had issued a report analysing the effects of the ban on the cultivation of opium poppies imposed by the Taliban in July 2000. In view of the seriousness of the issue of stocks of poppies, three assessment missions had been sent to Afghanistan in February 2001 and specialists from several countries had visited Afghanistan in May. While they could not determine the exact location of the stocks, they could nonetheless affirm that the stocks did exist in the region, if not in Afghanistan itself. An analysis of average opium poppy production in Afghanistan since the early 1990s and a comparison between supply and demand in the main European markets, which had not yet been completed, showed that, for the moment, the stock of poppies was on the order of 2,800 tons.

26. **Mr. Vetere** (Director of the Centre for International Crime Prevention), replying to the representative of India, said that he regretted the delays in providing documents to Member States and agreed that the situation should be improved. At its tenth session, held from 8 to 17 May, and its resumed tenth session, on 6 and 7 September, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had adopted plans of action relating to the implementation of the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice, annexed to General Assembly resolution 55/59. Those plans, which appeared in the Commission's report (E/2001/30/Rev.1), set out measures to be taken at the national and international level with regard to transnational organized crime, trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants, illicit manufacturing of firearms, corruption, money-laundering, terrorism, crime prevention and the protection of witnesses and victims of crime, prison overcrowding and alternates to incarceration, computer-related crime, juvenile justice, women's needs in the criminal-justice system, United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice, and restorative justice. The report on the resumed tenth session also contained the text of two draft resolutions to be submitted for adoption by the General Assembly, concerning a new convention against corruption and the plans of action for the implementation of the Vienna Declaration; they had not been communicated to the Member States, because they had not yet been adopted by the Economic and Social Council. Furthermore, the plan of action on terrorism established links between transnational organized crime, drug-trafficking, money transfers and terrorism, which should progressively allow more effective measures to be taken against that scourge.

27. **Ms. Stevens** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, and Cyprus, Iceland, Malta, Norway and Turkey, said that the European Union wished to express its concern

about the growth of drug production, trafficking and consumption. Drug use was a global phenomenon and certain States, particularly in Africa, were extremely vulnerable. That was why, when drawing up its 2000-2004 Action Plan to Combat Drugs, the European Union had set geographical priorities. It called on the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) to provide optimum support for efforts by the African countries to launch anti-drug programmes at the national and regional levels.

28. Drug consumption frequently went hand in hand with the spread of HIV/AIDS, and the European Union fully supported the increasing attention paid by UNDCP to that link. Moreover, the European Union was greatly concerned by the threat posed by synthetic drugs, particularly amphetamine-type stimulants; it denounced the sale of such substances on the Internet and called for cooperation between States importing and exporting precursors.

29. The European Union urged Member States to adopt appropriate legislation and to establish financial-investigation units to counter money-laundering linked to drug-trafficking in order to achieve by 2003 the objectives established at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, in 1998.

30. At that session, Member States had recognized that demand reduction was essential; consequently, the European Union welcomed the significant increase in UNDCP activities in the areas of prevention, assistance to wean drug addicts off drugs, and access to treatment through rehabilitation. On the question of prevention, the European Union supported the spread of best on-the-ground practices and considered that street children, young people in vulnerable situations, or victims of sexual abuse, for example, required specific strategies. Regarding access to treatment and rehabilitation, women, particularly, those who were pregnant, young people, refugees and minorities needed easier access to social assistance and social services; the special needs of children of drug addicts also needed to be addressed. Importance should be given to vocational training, help in finding accommodation, social reintegration, and alternatives to imprisonment for drug addicts who had committed criminal acts.

31. Like demand reduction, supply reduction was a key element of efforts to combat drug abuse, and the European Union supported measures designed to prevent, limit and eliminate the cultivation, production and distribution of and trafficking in drugs, improved regional cooperation to combat cross-border trafficking, reinforcement of border controls with modern tools and training in better practice in the area of law-enforcement procedures. The collection of reliable, objective data and the evaluation of anti-drug activities were also important tools, because both Governments and UNDCP required updated statistics on the profile and motivations of drug users.

32. The UNDCP should continue to play its role of catalyst of regional cooperation between drug-affected countries and should help countries elaborate national supply- and demand-reduction plans. The European Union considered that UNDCP action should be better integrated into the programmes of other United Nations agencies. The European Union had taken note of the measures recently adopted by the Executive Director of UNDCP with a view to improving the functioning and management of the Programme, and also the inspection report from the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

33. Turning to agenda item 110, she welcomed the opening for signature, in December 2000, of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Additional Protocols, which would make it possible to strengthen judicial cooperation and emphasize the protection of victims and prevention. The European Union appealed to all States to ratify those instruments as soon as possible.

34. The States members of the European Union intended to sign the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition at the current session of the General Assembly and urged all Member States to follow suit. Two other protocols to the Convention, against trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants, respectively, marked a turning point in the fight against trafficking in human beings. In order to combat that phenomenon, which was exacerbated by globalization, countries of origin, transit and destination should develop effective joint strategies and penal measures.

35. The European Union, which attached great importance to the drafting of an international convention against corruption, welcomed the outcome of the summer meeting of the Intergovernmental Open-Ended Expert Group to Prepare Draft Terms of Reference for the Negotiation of an International Legal

Instrument against Corruption. It called on Member States to adopt, at the current session, the resolution approving those terms of reference and encouraged them to participate in the work of the ad hoc committee responsible for drafting the convention.

36. The European Union noted with interest the efforts of the United Nations to combat modern forms of crime; it was particularly concerned about the exploitation of information technology for criminal purposes.

37. The plans of action adopted at the tenth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice constituted an important tool for implementing concrete measures to combat international crime. The Union called on Member States to provide the United Nations specialized bodies and agencies, which played a central role in the fight against drugs and crime, with the resources that they needed to carry out their mandates.

38. **Mr. Musambachime** (Zambia), speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), expressed warm congratulations to the Secretary-General and the United Nations in connection with the recent awarding to them of the 2001 Nobel Peace Prize, which had been richly deserved. In the light of the recent terrorist attacks against the United States of America, SADC wished to join with those who had called for the adoption and implementation of international conventions against crime, including terrorism.

39. The Community took note of the measures and strategies outlined in Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), which demonstrated that the international community was determined to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. It pointed out that terrorism and organized crime were interlinked; and welcomed, in that connection, the adoption in 2000 of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which opened new perspectives for assisting Member States in combating organized crime, especially through the provision of technical assistance. SADC was confident that the Convention, which was the first legally binding instrument in that area, would make it possible to strengthen the capacity of the countries of the region to combat crime and eliminate the inconsistencies among States that had been exploited by criminal networks.

40. Globalization and the free movement of persons, goods and services that it had brought about had helped organized crime to become more sophisticated. Innovative approaches were required to combat it. He noted, in that connection that the Convention would enable the countries of the Community to strengthen their capacity to combat money-laundering, corruption, drug abuse and drug trafficking, the illegal mining of diamonds and other precious minerals, the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and the more recent phenomenon of computer-related crime.

41. Criminal organizations had no regard for borders and collaborated among themselves; in order to thwart them, police forces from different countries must therefore work closely together and exchange information. For that reason, the SADC countries coordinated on all matters of public security through the Southern African Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCO), an Interpol institution established in 1997. SARPCO conducted joint operations targeting motor vehicle theft and trafficking in drugs, firearms and precious stones and had succeeded in significantly reducing trafficking in stolen motor vehicles, which was extremely prevalent in the region.

42. With regard to drugs, he considered that the Political Declaration adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to countering the world drug problem together, marked a commitment, to which the Community subscribed, to address all aspects of the drug problem at both the national and international levels with a view to curbing drug abuse and drug trafficking. The Community was conducting a number of joint activities with the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODDCP), notably with respect to legal matters and supply reduction and was also collaborating with other partners. It wished to point out, in that connection, that poverty and underdevelopment were the main causes of drug trafficking, corruption and money-laundering, a fact that was taken into account in its programmes.

43. On the question of illicit trade in small arms, the Programme of Action adopted by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects had marked a significant step towards preventing, combating and eradicating the trade. In August 2001, the heads of State and Government of SADC had signed a protocol

which constituted a far-reaching legal instrument for controlling both illicit and legally-held small arms.

44. Measures against crime would not achieve the desired results without effective systems of law enforcement and criminal justice. In that regard, SADC would appreciate cooperation in capacity-building, including training, technical assistance and development of expertise, as stipulated in the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice. SADC reiterated the important role which could be played in African countries by the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI). SADC hoped that other donors and partners would assist in its efforts.

45. **Ms. Leyton** (Chile), speaking on agenda item 111 on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the Group welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly (A/56/157), in which he emphasized that, in adopting the Political Declaration (resolution S-20/2, annex), Member States had expressed a high-level commitment to address all elements of the drug problem at both the national and international levels. However, in spite of the considerable progress made since the special session, there was still much to be done to achieve the goals and targets set in the Political Declaration for 2003 and 2008. The biennial reports of the Executive Director of UNDCP, the first of which had already been issued in accordance with Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 44/2, were important tools for that purpose.

46. At their Fifteenth Presidential Summit, held in Santiago in August 2001, the heads of State and Government of the Rio Group had reiterated the need to continue promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation, based on the principle of shared responsibility, and also to develop a coordinated regional strategy to give impetus to international efforts to control, inter alia, the chemical inputs used to manufacture drugs, including precursors, and to monitor trafficking in drugs, including synthetic drugs, money-laundering related to drug trafficking, and similar crimes. The development and implementation of effective strategies to combat and punish such crimes, as well as the illicit trade in small arms, contributed to the fight against terrorism and its sources of funding, which had become a priority for the international community.

47. To ensure that regional initiatives resulted in effective and permanent instruments for international cooperation, the principles of international law must be applied in all circumstances. In that light, the fight against illicit drug trafficking at sea should be based on article 17 of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, international law and the sovereignty of the State in whose territory the operation was being carried out. The Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism established by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission had already completed its first round of evaluations of the progress achieved, individually or collectively, by the countries of the region in fighting the drug problem.

48. Several positive steps had been taken at the international level. It was clear that preferential access to international markets for products from the developing countries engaged in the fight against drugs contributed markedly to the security and the economic and social development of those countries. But although the results so far achieved in reducing supply had exceeded all expectations, the same could not be said of demand, and that was all the more disturbing because children and young people were increasingly playing a part in producing and selling drugs, as well as in consuming them. For all those reasons, the Rio Group reiterated the need to follow scrupulously the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction.

49. **Mr. Mack** (United States of America) said his country appreciated the support and solidarity it had received from the international community since 11 September. Its attachment to its core tenets had been strengthened as a result, but as the Secretary-General had stated, the attacks were a blow against everything the United Nations stood for. He therefore hoped that the expressions of support from all the States which opposed terrorism would soon be matched by effective operational steps. In the immediate future, it was important to implement all the provisions of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). As the rule of law itself had come under attack on 11 September, the emphasis must be placed on compliance with international law and judicial cooperation. There must be no compromise with criminal organizations, which lacked respect for democracy and the dignity of human life. President Bush's Administration had adopted as its overriding objective to thwart such organizations, and

primarily those engaged in terrorism and drug trafficking. That was why it had recently frozen the financial assets of a number of terrorist organizations and front groups, a measure which as many countries as possible should employ. Congress and the Department of Justice had undertaken to re-examine the legislation in force with a view to determining what changes could be made to enable law-enforcement officers to investigate more effectively. For its part, the Treasury Department was endeavouring to track the money which enabled transnational criminal organizations to operate, while in Congress, Republicans and Democrats were working together to combat money-laundering. The United States had also set up procedures to ensure more effective tracking of persons entering the country illegally and to tighten up security at airports and flying schools, and the procedure for issuing licences to transport hazardous materials would be made stricter.

50. International cooperation leading to the identification and dismantling of criminal syndicates and permitting the imprisonment of ringleaders was vital because terrorist organizations were undeterred by political borders. Since 11 September, regional and multilateral institutions such as the Organization of American States, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the North Atlantic Council, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Association of South-East Asian Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community had pledged their renewed efforts to combat terrorist activity. The international community's greatest asset was naturally still the United Nations, because it alone had the unifying force to win over all nations, as was evidenced by the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council the day after the terrorist attacks against the United States. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) stipulated, inter alia, that all States must prevent and suppress the financing of terrorist acts, deny safe haven to terrorists, refrain from providing any form of support, active or passive, to terrorist organizations and provide law-enforcement and judicial cooperation to ward off acts of terrorism. The battle against terrorism was being waged on many different fronts in the United Nations. In addition to the 12 pending conventions or protocols, which were in the process of being ratified and which specifically targeted terrorism, there was also the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which had already been signed by 126 Member States. The United States urged all Member States to ratify all the conventions and their additional protocols as soon as possible. Those texts would enable many States to obtain valuable technical assistance, to review their respective codes of criminal procedure and to improve cooperation with each other. As Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) so rightly noted, the close connection between international terrorism and transnational organized crime seriously jeopardized international security.

51. It was vital to prevent transnational crime rings from reaping any profits from their activities. The first step towards the achievement of that goal had been the adoption of several United Nations drug conventions and the signing of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which contained provisions on money-laundering. A further basis for action was the Global Programme against Money Laundering, which deserved the financial support of the developed countries. It was also possible to rely on the backing of the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, various similar regional organizations and the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units.

52. Experience showed that the corruption of officialdom facilitated the growth of transnational crime and threatened the stability of elected Governments, especially in countries in transition. The United States was therefore glad that the General Assembly was overseeing the drafting of a new convention against corruption. The lofty goals set in 1998 at the General Assembly's special session devoted to the world drug problem had resulted in significant progress in the fight against drug trafficking. Furthermore, the commitments set out in the three United Nations drug conventions had given rise to five action plans and a declaration on drug-demand reduction. In order to rise to all those challenges, Member States should engage in practical cooperation to secure the enforcement of existing laws. They should also tighten domestic legislation if it was lax and support the reform of mechanisms for international cooperation which had proved inadequate or ineffective, so that the global community could act in unison. But, of course, it was most important to maintain firm collective political will. Whatever the

short-term costs of decisive action, they paled in comparison to the long-term costs of disinterest.

53. **Ms. Yanagawa** (Japan) said that efforts to control transnational organized crime and drug-trafficking had become all the more imperative, since those sources were used to finance terrorism, a genuine threat to the life and dignity of the human person.

54. Japan supported the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the three related Protocols, and had not only participated actively in their elaboration, but had also thus helped developing countries to take part. In view of the urgency of ensuring the rapid implementation of those instruments, her Government had also contributed to the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund and supported the activities of the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC). Convinced that international and regional cooperation only facilitated efforts to control organized crime, Japan had assumed the full administration of the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI) and had hosted the Asia-Pacific Law Enforcement Conference against Transnational Organized Crime. The Government also intended to participate in work to commence in January 2002 on the elaboration of an international instrument against corruption, and welcomed the finalization by the Council of Europe of the Draft Convention on Cyber crime, in which it had itself participated.

55. Japan cooperated fully with other States, UNDCP and other international organizations in implementing the global strategy in the area of international drug control. The Government had launched a five-year strategy which aimed to: prevent drug abuse among young people, ensure strict law enforcement in the realm of drug-trafficking and abuse, impose border controls, and facilitate the rehabilitation of ex-drug users. Convinced that prevention was more effective and cost-efficient in reducing drug demand than rehabilitation, Japan made efforts to ensure that its young people in primary and secondary schools were provided with objective information on the drug problem and on preventive measures. The Government also gave bilateral assistance to many countries in the region to support their anti-drug efforts and would also support international efforts to that end.

56. **Mr. Sánchez Nuñez** (Cuba) said that the scourge of drugs and drug-related crime continued to expand owing to heavy demand exacerbated by globalization. In order to deal with that serious and complex challenge, genuine international cooperation to address all aspects of the problem was indispensable. Such cooperation was doomed to failure, however, if international law and, therefore, the very principles on which international cooperation was founded were not respected. Such cooperation could be based only on the sharing of responsibilities, taking account of all stages of the process, from production to distribution, and equality of all stakeholders. It was also crucial that developed countries should better assist developing countries in acquiring the appropriate means to combat drug-trafficking. Cuba reaffirmed its condemnation of unilateral action on the part of certain States. In particular, it was unacceptable that the country that was the largest consumer of drugs in the world should claim the role of international arbiter in seeking to impose the so-called drug certification process, which only served to complicate anti-drug cooperation and undermine the elementary rules for coexistence among States.

57. His delegation supported the efforts of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP); its assistance to Cuba had enabled the country to strengthen its human capacities in the anti-drug field and to enhance its technical capacities to some degree. He also supported the work of the International Narcotics Control Board, which was the only world authority competent to assess the efforts of States in an impartial and objective manner and to promote effective international cooperation.

58. Although Cuban society was virtually free from drug-related problems, Cuba was situated near one of the largest centres of drug consumption in the world and had thus long been seeking to prevent its territory from being used as a transit zone for the flow of drugs towards the United States market. Since 1970, the Cuban authorities had arrested more than 700 foreign drug traffickers and confiscated approximately 100 aircraft and boats, including 80 registered in the United States. More than 31 tons of narcotics had been seized over the past seven years, and, if it had not been for the efforts of the authorities, more than a billion individual doses of cocaine would have been consumed over the past five years in the United States and other countries. Those efforts had all been undertaken despite their huge economic burden and an insufficiency of material

resources, and in the absence of steady cooperation with the authorities of the main country concerned. Several recent occurrences — such as the seizure in 1999 in Cuban territorial waters of two cargoes each of four tons of cocaine — testified to the Government's unwavering will to engage in all possible types of cooperation in that field with every country without exception. It should be stressed that Cuba had signed bilateral cooperation agreements with 30 countries in the field of combating drug trafficking. Moreover, Cuba would be hosting the Regional Conference on Caribbean Drug Enforcement and Control on 9 and 10 November 2001, at which concrete strategies on preventing illicit drug use, controlling drug-trafficking, and money-laundering in the region would be debated.

59. Lastly, Cuba reiterated the offer of cooperation that it had extended to the United States Government in July 1999. It requested nothing in return — not even the lifting of the economic and financial embargo — in order to reach an agreement on drug-trafficking control, an area in which the United States of America had a far greater stake than Cuba. Even without such an agreement, Cuba was intent on combating drug-trafficking, not only to protect Cuban society from its detrimental effects but also because it considered it a moral responsibility towards peoples affected by the scourge, and an international duty.

60. **Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein), speaking on agenda item 110, said that the fight against international organized crime had become an increasingly important issue and that there was a correlation between terrorism and other forms of international organized crime, particularly in the areas of communication and money transfers. The expertise of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Office of the Centre for International Crime Prevention could be of major assistance in the implementation of the provisions of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). His delegation therefore welcomed the fact that the Counter-Terrorism Committee established pursuant to the resolution was examining ways to use that expertise.

61. Liechtenstein had long been committed to the fight against international organized crime. The Head of the Government had signed the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in Palermo, in 2000, and Liechtenstein had signed the additional protocols, in March 2001. As an economic centre with high-quality financial services, Liechtenstein had reinforced its fight against money-laundering by implementing institutional changes in order to meet the highest international standards in that regard. Aware that organized crime knew no boundaries, it was collaborating closely with the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in order to reshape its legislation and enforcement mechanisms. International cooperation should be based on transparency, fairness and mutual understanding. Attempts to pursue unrelated goals or combat other types of criminal activity under the pretence of fighting money-laundering could only hinder international cooperation. Such cooperation was particularly necessary in the light of the events of 11 September. Liechtenstein would pay special attention to those aspects of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) related to the financing of terrorist acts. It had already expressed its determination in that respect by signing the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and it was fully equipped and resolved to contribute to the implementation of all the provisions of resolution 1373. Lastly, it welcomed the dialogue initiated by the Bureau of the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

62. **Ms. Khalil** (Egypt) said that, in his report in document A/565/157, the Secretary-General had described the progress that had been made in the fight against the world drug problem, particularly with regard to supply reduction. The implementation of the Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development had already resulted in the destruction of significant areas of such crops. Despite international efforts, however, the drug problem remained an obstacle to development; extensive global action was therefore needed. The eradication of the sources of production was insufficient, in itself, to resolve the problem, which knew no boundaries. Unemployment, poverty and violence were its underlying causes and it had negative effects at the economic, social, legal, health, psychological and moral levels.

63. Her delegation therefore called for increased cooperation between the international community, civil society, competent non-governmental organizations and the specialized agencies, and also for local initiatives, as well as an increase in the support and resources contributed to developing countries exposed to the drug problem. Moreover, Egypt invited the United Nations

Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention and also the programmes established by UNICEF and other organizations to work together in order to devise innovative solutions, particularly with regard to the rehabilitation of drug addicts, the social reintegration of young children, consciousness-raising, education and prevention. It was also important to propose alternate sources of income for those who made a living from the illicit production of and trafficking in drugs.

64. Egypt was aware that globalization and the revolution in information and communication technologies, together with the elimination of borders, had negative effects on international crime, which was diversifying and impeding the international community's efforts to promote social development. Egypt had signed the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which testified to the will of the international community to make a concerted response to that scourge.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

United Nations A/C.3/56/SR.9

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Chairman: Mr. Al-Hinai ..... (Oman)

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* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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01-57819 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 110: Crime prevention and criminal justice (A/56/3, 83, 151, 155, 222, 380, A/56/402-E/2001/105 and A/56/403) (*continued*)

Agenda item 111: International drug control (A/56/3, 83, 157 and 222) (*continued*)

1. **Mr. García González** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic, said that their Governments shared the opinions expressed by the representative of Chile on behalf of the Rio Group, and reaffirmed their political will to confront the global drug problem at all levels and strengthen international cooperation as an effective instrument to combat it.

2. They had been working in various interrelated areas in order to comply with essential international requirements in the fight against drugs. The most significant efforts included: elaboration, adoption and implementation of national anti-drug plans; signature and ratification of the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters and the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials; design and application of an integrated system to collect, analyse and maintain statistics and documents on the reduction of supply and demand and on control measures; elaboration and adoption of a national demand-reduction strategy, based on the United Nations Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction; establishment or strengthening of prevention programmes; and studies to determine the dimensions of drug consumption among the general population.

3. Within the framework of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic had contributed to developing a multilateral evaluation mechanism to monitor progress in hemispheric efforts to deal with the problem; the mechanism made periodic recommendations to member States aimed at improving their ability to control drug abuse and trafficking and at strengthening multilateral cooperation.

4. At the subregional level, ongoing efforts were being made to elaborate a Central American plan of action within the permanent Central American Commission for the Eradication of Drug Abuse, Production and Illicit Trafficking, taking into consideration the elements defined in the United Nations Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction and the related Action Plan adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session.

5. The international community had reached a historic consensus on the need to combat terrorism in all its forms and also all groups that used terror and violence against civilians as a means of achieving their objectives, which threatened international peace and security. Groups that obtained their wealth from drug trafficking, organized crime, arms trafficking and related crimes, including money-laundering, were a scourge on society, and the international community should expand its efforts to combat them with the same energy and determination with which it combated terrorist groups.

6. **Mr. Stuart** (Australia) said that the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice, adopted at the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, acknowledged the need for the international community to address the challenges posed by transnational organized crime. It recognized the need for cooperation among States in combating global criminal activity, especially people smuggling and people trafficking.

7. People smuggling was an issue of particular concern to many countries, not just those that were a destination, such as Australia, but also source and transit countries. It was a growing area of transnational criminal activity that sought to profit from the misfortunes of the dispossessed and vulnerable. The profitability of people smuggling and trafficking rivalled that of narcotics, with proceeds estimated at some $10 billion a year, and it appeared that the same criminal networks were involved in both activities. Australia was strongly committed to fighting against people smuggling. Its policies and laws sought to deter and disrupt the activities of such criminal networks. However, no country or organization could solve the problem unilaterally.

8. The international community should not allow the refugee-protection system to be abused by people smugglers and those who sought their services. A determined international effort was necessary in order to develop a coherent approach by implementing

effective laws that punished perpetrators, strengthening border protection and enforcement, developing systems that ensured the prompt return and readmission of illegal migrants and enhancing cooperation among law-enforcement agencies. The United Nations had an important role to play, and should adopt a more coordinated response.

9. Australia would continue to work closely with its regional partners to examine ways to develop regional solutions. It would also seek multilateral solutions through the United Nations, focusing particularly on the commitments outlined in the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice and on implementation of the existing programmes of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. It urged Member States to give the necessary urgency to transnational organized crime and to increase support for international efforts to combat people smuggling through close regional and international cooperation.

10. **Mr. Mei** Yuncai (China) said that, owing to advances in science and technology and the growth of communications, many criminal activities now transcended borders and extended to the political and economic realm, causing serious harm to the normal social order, political stability and economic development of States. His delegation supported recent United Nations activities in crime prevention and criminal justice.

11. His Government had helped draft the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols, annexed to General Assembly resolution 55/25, and had signed the Convention on the day that it had been opened for signature. The Convention could play its expected role in combating transnational organized crime only if implemented effectively. Considering the many practical difficulties facing developing countries, the international community should provide technical and financial assistance to enable them to implement the Convention and collaborate in combating transnational organized crime.

12. The fight against corruption had become a common task facing all countries. Sharing experiences and also implementing international cooperation against corruption would help counter the problem. China was participating actively in the drafting of an instrument against corruption as requested in General Assembly resolution 55/61.

13. Groups involved in transnational organized crime currently represented the most harmful form of criminality facing mankind, and many were closely connected to terrorist activities. The Chinese Government was ready to join other Governments and the United Nations to prevent and combat such crime in order to safeguard social and economic development.

14. **Ms. Seo** Bihn (Republic of Korea) said that the international community had made great strides in crime prevention. The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols were the major vehicle to eradicate corruption, trafficking in persons and transnational organized crime, and Member States should sign and ratify them promptly.

15. The adoption of the Convention and its protocols provided momentum for an international framework against corruption. Her delegation hoped that the cooperative spirit that had prevailed during the adoption of the Convention would carry over into the upcoming negotiations on the international legal instrument against corruption currently be elaborated pursuant to General Assembly resolution 55/61. Her Government had offered to host the third Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and the eleventh International Anti-Corruption Conference in Seoul in 2003.

16. Since the responsibilities of the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention had increased, the financial basis of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme should be strengthened by increased resources from the regular budget as well as voluntary contributions from Member States. Meanwhile, the Programme should focus on achievable priority areas, while endeavouring to enhance the efficiency of technical assistance.

17. Controlling the manufacture and transfer of illicit drugs was another challenge that required attention. Her Government had reaffirmed its commitment to the action plans and other measures adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. Most Member States had instituted a national drug-control strategy, incorporating the goals and targets identified at the special session and, through political will and international support, the trade in illicit drugs had been curbed in some regions. The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime further contributed to judicial cooperation and

criminalized money-laundering. Nevertheless, a firmer resolve was required in order to strengthen international cooperation in crime prevention.

18. Synthetic drugs were being increasingly consumed by young people owing to the unrestrained availability of precursors, the simplicity of manufacturing and the difficulty of controlling the constantly changing raw materials used for their production. It was therefore imperative to maintain the commitment to sharing information about new chemicals used for their manufacture and re-evaluating the scope of substance control.

19. **Ms. Limpias** (Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Andean Community (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela), said that their Governments' political will to combat illicit drugs was reflected in the implementation of the Andean plan for cooperation to combat illicit drugs and related crimes, established at the June 2001 summit meeting of the Presidents of the countries of the Andean Community.

20. In that regard, opening world markets to the products of countries committed to the fight against drugs would make a significant contribution to the effort. The renewal and expansion of the Andean Trade Preference Act, which would expire on 4 December 2001, were essential for the future of the common effort. That regime had made a significant contribution to the economic and social development of the Andean countries by helping to generate employment and legal alternatives to activities linked to drug production and trafficking. That model, together with others such as the Andean Generalized System of Preferences granted by the European Union, were extremely useful. Indeed, the commitment of the industrialized countries to improving the economic and social situation in the Andean countries was essential.

21. **Mr. Chuguihuara** (Peru) associated himself with the statements made by the representative of Chile, speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, and by the representative of Bolivia, speaking on behalf of the Andean Community.

22. He said that the production and consumption of and illegal trafficking in drugs continued to pose a major problem for humanity. Recalling the measures adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, he stressed that the globalization of the drug problem called for more committed participation of the international community based on shared responsibility, in accordance with each country's economic capacity and with full respect for international law. It also required an integrated approach, in which no aspect was favoured to the detriment of others.

23. Accordingly, Peru advocated increased international cooperation in combating that evil through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms for enhancing the operational capacity of the forces of law and order and financing alternative-development projects in drug-producing areas at no extra cost to the beneficiary countries. Stable channels should also be established for the flow of investment and for preferential placement of products from those areas on international markets.

24. One of the basic objectives of his Government's development policy was the eradication of all aspects of the drug trade, founded on a threefold goal: reduced coca cultivation, replacing it with alternative-development and environmental-conservation programmes; comprehensive prevention and treatment to reduce drug abuse; and suppression, through law enforcement, of illegal drug production and trafficking, in the interests of human rights and dignity.

25. Those objectives had gone hand in hand with a three-pronged strategy of prohibition, alternative development, and prevention and rehabilitation, in strict observance of agreements concluded and international declarations. Properly conceived and enforced prohibition was vital for generating conditions conducive to alternative development; without it, the profitability of legal farm products would decline, whereas it was needed to guarantee security and make viable the investment and productive activity required for alternative programmes.

26. The existence of vast expanses of land in Peru devoted to illegal crops had often stemmed from farmers' socio-economic needs and pressure from crime syndicates fuelled by growing international demand. Peru therefore considered alternative development — in the form of both crop substitution and the creation of new, profitable, environmentally sustainable economic activities that would enable the inhabitants to escape the pernicious international drug circuit — to be a priority strategy for reducing production of the raw material used to manufacture drugs.

27. The drug phenomenon had an important national security component. Very recently in Peru, social and economic instability had served to tie drug trafficking to terrorism, which inevitably destroyed the foundations of any political, social or economic system. For that reason, his Government was committed to strengthening the social fabric with a view to ensuring lasting solutions.

28. Lastly, in his Government's resolve to eradicate the scourge of drugs, President Toledo had recently appointed an "anti-drug czar", whose sole task would be to do battle with the country's grave drug problem.

29. **Mr. Valdivieso** (Colombia) called on the international community to bring to the drug problem a holistic, balanced approach based on shared responsibility, as agreed at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. Recognition of the global nature of the problem and of the need to make common cause in dealing with it had been one of the major advances.

30. As pointed out in the Hemispheric Report 1999-2000 of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism for drug control of the Organization of American States (OAS), drug trafficking had become sophisticated and employed the means of globalization. For their trafficking in illicit drugs, controlled substances and weapons, and for money-laundering, international crime syndicates used the same resources and mechanisms as did international trade in goods and services. With globalization the deleterious effects of the drug trade and its attendant evils now crossed borders and threatened all nations.

31. At the 2001 Summit of the Americas, President Pastrana had stressed that the drug problem was not Colombia's alone, but had its epicentre in all countries of America, which, in one way or another, were links in the chain of pain and death.

32. By the same token, globalization provided opportunities for concerted action in the war against illicit drugs. But, to that end, local positions must be abandoned in favour of joint action at each and every stage. In that connection, his country assigned priority to the commitment made in the Political Declaration adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly to establish by 2003 new or enhanced demand-reduction strategies. His delegation underscored the need for full implementation of the related Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction and its Plan of Action if those goals were to be met.

33. There was an urgent need for well-thought-out strategies with which to grapple with the impending challenges of synthetic drugs, which experts considered the most buoyant segment of the world drug trade. A holistic and balanced war against illicit drugs entailed not only an attack on supply and demand, but also firm action against drug-related crimes. Individual and subregional action could not possibly suffice. The challenge called for an intensive short-, medium- and long-term policy that underpinned the principles of multilateralism, shared responsibility and balance.

34. At the national level, Colombia was still striving to extinguish the flame that drugs had added to the country's internal strife; at the Andean level, it was working for implementation of the Andean Cooperation Plan for Control of Illegal Drugs and Related Offences; and at the hemispheric level, the Minister for Foreign Affairs had called for a specialized conference to pinpoint new inter-American political and technical cooperation activities under the auspices of the OAS and of the United Nations.

35. Since 11 September the international community had been closely involved in the battle against terrorism. Everyone should remember that the financial networks that used terrorism were similar, if not the same, as those that serviced the traffic in drugs and illegal arms, especially small, light weapons.

36. To address terrorism in a spirit of shared responsibility entailed a head-on battle with those networks and an assault on money-laundering, which was their financial source. The assistance of the international community was fundamental in that regard, and the United Nations had a role to play by boosting the Global Programme against Money-laundering of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, which provided technical cooperation to countries and conducted research. In addition to its permanent place on the agenda of the Commissions on Narcotic Drugs and on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, action to combat money-laundering called for a firmer, more comprehensive approach.

37. The countries faced with the worldwide problem of illicit drugs hoped that their efforts and achievements would receive full and just recognition. As stated earlier, his Government was ready to

contribute to that effort in a spirit of solidarity and with resolve.

38. **Mr. Tarabrin** (Russian Federation) said that unprecedented growth in transnational crime had been witnessed in recent years, representing a threat to the very stability and security of Governments. It also fostered the growth of terrorism, illicit drug trafficking and trafficking in persons. The international community must respond vigorously to that danger, not as individual Governments or groups of countries, but on a global scale, and the United Nations had a central role to play in coordinating that response. The United Nations had also provided a solid basis in international law for the efforts of Governments to combat crime, and the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime had been a landmark. Universal accession to that instrument would allow the mechanisms it contained to become effective.

39. Corruption and money-laundering also required international action. Work should begin as soon as possible on the text of a future legal instrument against corruption. His Government saw such an instrument as a strategic necessity: in the past year alone, it had lost over $3 billion to corruption. Those efforts would require close cooperation and clear channels for the exchange of information. The Russian Federation had taken steps to strengthen its legal framework in that area.

40. The problems of drug abuse and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs had become more severe in Russia over the past decade, and his delegation hoped that the coordination role of the United Nations in the global response to those problems would be enhanced. It welcomed the results of the forty-fourth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly.

41. Almost two thirds of the illicit drugs entering the Russian Federation originated in Afghanistan, often destined for the markets of Western Europe and North America. His delegation strongly supported the efforts of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) to control the flow. Given the current conflict in that part of Asia, efforts were being made to ensure that the illicit drug trade did not shift to other Central Asian countries, and his delegation appreciated the support being provided to Central Asian Governments in their own efforts to combat that scourge. It also supported the International Narcotics Control Board in its position against the legalization of certain narcotic drugs or their removal from government control.

42. His Government would cooperate fully with other Member States in the long-term struggle against international crime and the illegal drug trade.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.